



HOOSIER VETERAN

IDVA Newsletter

October 2025



Welcome to the October Edition of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) Newsletter. We're glad you're here! This newsletter is one of the many ways IDVA is committed to serving and supporting our veteran community. The October issue includes discounts for military and veterans. The addition reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering relevant, high-impact content to Indiana's veteran community. By doing so, we aim to strengthen engagement and support across the state. We appreciate your continued feedback and will keep seeking your insights to ensure this newsletter remains a valuable resource.

We hope you enjoy this edition and find it informative and inspiring.

Jake Adams
Director,

COVER STORY

Safeguarding the GI Bill®: The Role of the Indiana State Approving Agency

For School Officials or Employers

Did You Know

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October

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Submit an Event on the IDVA Events Calendar

CONNECT WITH IDVA

79848



Text IDVA to 79848 and Join Our Text System
Tour the IDVA Agency Data Transparency.



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Safeguarding the GI Bill®: The Role of the Indiana State Approving Agency

By Amber Mertens, Director, Indiana Department of
Veterans Affairs State Approving Agency

The Indiana State Approving Agency (SAA) is an agency within the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs that is contracted by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to promote and protect the GI Bill. This benefit is earned by members of Active Duty, Selected Reserve, and National Guard to help veterans and eligible dependents cover the costs associated with education and training. The GI Bill provides access to a wide range of opportunities, including college degrees, vocational programs, and apprenticeships.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, also known as the GI Bill, into law on June 22, 1944. Congress recognized education as a function of the States and determined each state Governor should appoint a State Approving Agency to approve and oversee education and training programs for veterans using GI Bill benefits. Former Governor Ralph Gates created the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs in 1945, which served as Indiana's sole State Approving Agency until 1975 when the approving authority of private colleges and universities was transferred to the Indiana Commission on Proprietary Education. Governor Mitch Daniels returned all approving authority for veterans' education and training programs to the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs in 2007, where it remains today.

The primary focus of the SAA is to ensure veterans and their families have access to high-quality education and training. This involves reviewing, evaluating, and approving programs to ensure they meet state and federal criteria. In addition to approving programs, the SAA helps VA prevent fraud, waste, and abuse through oversight activities, including Risk Based Surveys and

see SAA next page

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S.



Supervisory Visits. These activities allow the SAA to investigate potential risks that are outside of the normal approval process and intervene when standards are not being met.

Today, the Indiana SAA has approved programs at more than 800 facilities across the state. In Fiscal Year 2024, the agency reviewed and approved more than 9,000 education and training programs. These approvals were made after conducting thorough reviews of catalogs, curriculum, advertising, accreditation, financial statements, and other publications. Approved facilities are required to maintain their approval status by submitting updates and seeking approval for new programs, ensuring continued quality for GI Bill beneficiaries.

Through this work, the SAA helps veterans and their families earn a degree, learn a trade, or start a new career. Each approval and oversight effort aims to protect the GI Bill and honor the service of those who earned it. By upholding high standards and safeguarding the GI Bill, the Indiana SAA ensures veterans and their families can pursue education and training with confidence, helping them build brighter futures and strengthening Indiana's workforce and communities.

If you are a **school official or employer** and would like more information about obtaining approval from the SAA for eligible veterans and dependents to use the GI Bill at your location, please email SAA@DVA.IN.GOV

DID YOU KNOW: The GI Bill can be used for more than a college degree? Some career fields with approved programs in Indiana include:

Police Officer - Firefighter - Plumber - Electrician
Cosmetologist - Massage Therapist
Certified Nurse Aide - Truck Driver
Paramedic - Commercial Pilot - And more!

Action Over Silence: End Veteran Suicide opened its doors in April 2025 and is an onsite partner with CONNECT Allen County. The mission of Action Over Silence: End Veteran Suicide is helping service members, veterans, family members and caregivers of veterans get connected to many different resources. These resources include:

- financial • employment • healthcare • housing
- mental health care • food • parenting • peer support
- substance use • social or VA connections in Allen County

These resources are proudly funded by the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs Community Challenge Grant. This grant empowers local initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by Indiana's veteran community, develop sustainable, community-led programs focused on suicide prevention. By investing in grassroots solutions, the grant helps build stronger, more resilient support networks for veterans across the state.



Follow us on Facebook

If you are a service member, veteran, family member, or caregiver, please scan this QR code to get connected to veteran related resources and events.

Peer Support Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 11:00am – 3:30pm

Tuesday and Thursday 8:30am – 1:00pm

Kate Shull, LCMHA, US Navy Veteran/Program Coordinator
Phone: 260-267-6532 Email: AOSCoordinator@dacac.org

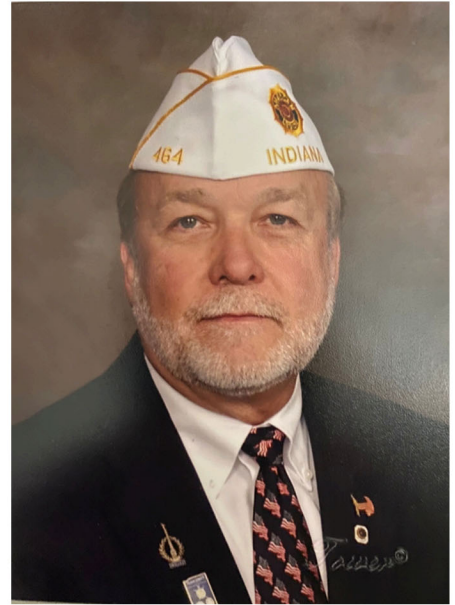
County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO) Spotlight

Ken Hylton-Ripley County

I served in the Army from 1970-1973. After basic and AIT, I served one year at Ft Bragg then served the rest of my enlistment at Ft Carson. I was a supply clerk in the motor pool at both locations. I ended my military career as an E-5 with a crypto clearance.

While serving, I noticed several soldiers struggling with depression and anxiety. Superiors stated they will outgrow it when they separate and go back home. After service, I continued to talk with many veterans who didn't know what to do or where to go for help. I worked at the postal service for over 30 years. I had veterans ask me questions. I gained a passion for helping them and wanted to be a CVSO to help other veterans in my community. My motivation is knowing I have knowledge to positively change the lives of those who served our country in small or in big ways.

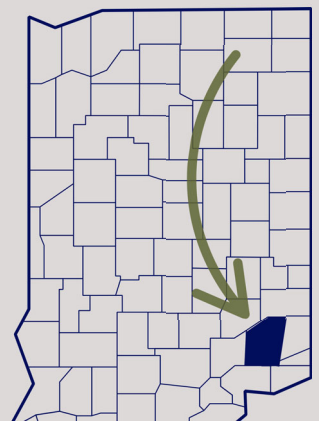
The Ripley County Service Office helps veterans get enrolled into health care, compensation, and guide them in directions for their specific needs. Call or stop in the office. Sometimes, I even work after hours or during weekends. We not only serve our county, some of our clients travel from neighboring states because of what we do.



Ken Hylton

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RIPLEY COUNTY



Military and Veteran Discounts

In response to overwhelming interest expressed in our recent veteran community survey—where 94% of participants requested information on military and veteran discounts—we're pleased to introduce a new section in our newsletter dedicated to savings opportunities. This new feature is designed to keep you informed about the savings and benefits that matter most to you. From retail offers to travel perks, we'll help you stay up to date on opportunities to save.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us. We'll continue to seek your input to make this newsletter even more valuable—so stay tuned for future chances to share your voice!

DISCOUNT

- Home Depot & Lowe's: 10% off for military personnel year-round, with expanded fall promotions on home improvement essentials.
- Target: Veterans and active-duty members can register for exclusive discounts during Veterans Day week.
- Under Armour: 20% off online purchases for military and first responders.

Dining Deals

- Applebee's: Free meal on Veterans Day for active-duty and veterans with proof of service.
- Golden Corral: Annual Military Appreciation Night in November with free meals for service members.

Entertainment & Travel

- National Parks: Free annual pass for current U.S. military members and their dependents.
- Amtrak: 10% discount for active-duty military and veterans on most fares.

Online Savings

- GovX & ID.me: Aggregated discounts across tech, apparel, fitness, and more—just verify your military status to unlock



Veteran Affairs Benefits and Healthcare

VA Benefits Increase September 2025: What Veterans Must Know

READ MORE



VA BENEFITS



Questions about the GI Bill®:
1-888-442-4551 (1-888-GIBILL1)



ABOUT THE GI BILL BENEFITS



ASK THE VA ABOUT THE GI BILL



APPLY FOR THE GI BILL



**SUBMIT ISSUES OR COMPLAINTS ABOUT APPROVED
SCHOOLS AND TRAINING FACILITIES**

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.



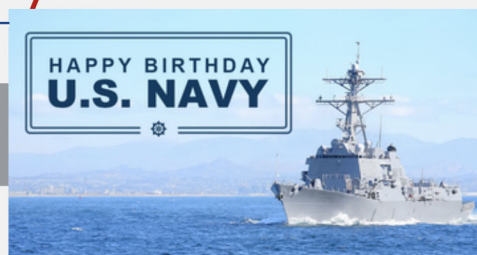
What's New
with WOMEN'S
HEALTH CARE?

LEARN MORE



**Veterans
Crisis Line**

OCTOBER



October 13 U.S. Navy Establishment/Birthday
26 National Day of Deployed
27 Navy Day





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system today!**

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79848**

**You will only receive
messages curated just
for you!**

317.232.3910

outreach@dva.in.gov

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Our Website](#)

Veteran Community Support

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