# WILLIAM & MARY

# MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER

## LETTER FROM THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT

KATHLEEN T. JABS

Dear Friends of William & Mary Military & Veteran Affairs,

This year, America marks 250 years of independence. In the City of Williamsburg and on our campus, that history lives in our streets, buildings and traditions. It also lives in the people who continue to serve.

Our Military & Veteran Affairs (MILVET) team is proud to serve those who have served, are serving and will serve. This spring, we had the privilege of recognizing military service across generations, including military family members.

We celebrated with our graduating students at a Military & Veteran Hail & Farewell. We cheered as student veterans crossed the Commencement stage wearing red, white and blue cords. We joined alumni, families and friends in Washington, D.C., during W&M Weekend with dedicated military and veteran events at the International Spy Museum and the National Museum of the United States Army. We then welcomed military spouses from across the region for William & Mary's second annual Empowering Military Spouses Symposium.

Different events. Different audiences. One common thread: service.

As William & Mary celebrates the Year of Civic Leadership, we are reminded that leadership begins with a commitment to something larger than ourselves and that service can take many forms. Military service shaped the generations who helped build our nation, and it continues to shape the military-connected students, alumni, families, faculty, staff and supporters who carry that tradition forward today.

As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of American independence, we are reminded that the story of our nation is still being written. Read our latest newsletter and celebrate the stories and the people shaping the next chapter.

Lastly, thank you for your support on One Tribe One Day. We're grateful for the opportunity to provide meaningful programming to our growing military-connected community.

Go Tribe,

Kathleen

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# Highlights

## Celebrating Our Military-Connected Graduates

This spring, William & Mary proudly celebrated the Class of 2026, including our military-connected graduates. We first recognized these students at our annual Hail & Farewell celebration on May 12, honoring their achievements and welcoming them into William & Mary's growing network of military-connected alumni before they crossed the commencement stage on May 15.

From veterans and service members to military spouses and dependents, these graduates have demonstrated exceptional resilience, leadership, and determination throughout their academic journeys. The Military & Veteran Affairs team congratulates each graduate on this milestone achievement and wishes them continued success in their next chapter. Congratulations, Class of 2026!

## W&M Weekend Celebrates Military Service

On May 31, William & Mary alumni, students, and friends gathered at the National Museum of the United States Army for W&M's Past, Present & Future at America's 250th, a special event celebrating the university's 333-year legacy and the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary. The event was generously sponsored by C. Mary Ann Bowery '93 and Colonel Charles Bowery Jr. '92, U.S. Army (Retired).

Guests learned about William & Mary's rich military history from historian and retired U.S. Army Colonel Brit Erslev '97, explored the museum's Call to Arms: The Soldier and the Revolutionary War exhibit, and participated in a panel discussion moderated by Kathleen Jabs, Special Assistant to the President for Military & Veteran Affairs. Panelists Michael Powell '85, D.P.S. '02; Brigadier General Tim Brady '97; Angelique Echols '25, M.Ed. '27; and NROTC Midshipman Parker Sauer '29 shared perspectives on service, civic responsibility, and leadership.

A highlight of the event was a special announcement by President Katherine Rowe that Colonel Charles Bowery Jr. '92, U.S. Army (Retired), will be inducted into the Army's ROTC Hall of Fame in recognition of his distinguished service and lasting contributions to the military community.

*Photos courtesy of William & Mary.*

# Highlights

## MILVET Leadership Featured in Stars and Stripes

STARS AND STRIPES

MILVET's Special Assistant to the President for Military & Veteran Affairs, Kathleen Jabs, was recently featured in Stars and Stripes with an op-ed titled, "Military Appreciation Requires More Than Thanks."

In the piece, Jabs argues that while gratitude for service members is important, meaningful appreciation must also recognize the families who serve alongside them through frequent moves, career disruptions, deployments, and uncertainty. As conversations about readiness, retention, and national security continue, she emphasizes the critical role military families play in supporting those who serve.

The op-ed reflects MILVET's ongoing work to support military-connected students, families, and communities while strengthening connections between higher education and military service.

Read the full op-ed in Stars and Stripes.

Stay tuned for the summer issue of GI Jobs magazine, where William & Mary's military heritage will be featured.

## Center for Military Transition Featured at National Convenings

The Center for Military Transition's work was recently featured at several national forums focused on military transition and veteran success.

In May, Jonathan "JD" Due, the CMT's Executive Director, facilitated a discussion with the CEO of The Honor Foundation and the Executive Director of Transition Programs for Naval Special Warfare during the Global Special Operations Forces Association's SOF Week in Tampa, Florida.

The session, Strength in Transition, highlighted the CMT's approach to supporting service members as they transition from military service through a focus on values alignment, wellness, strengths identification, impression management, and relationship building.

In June, JD was invited to share the CMT's work at convenings hosted by the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and during a roundtable discussion with national thought leaders at the Disney Veterans Institute in Washington, D.C.

# Highlights

## 2nd Annual Empowering Military Spouses Symposium

On June 5,more than 160 military spouses gathered at William & Mary for the2nd Annual Empowering Military Spouses Symposium (EMSS), a day of connection, inspiration, and growth centered on the theme: Embrace History. Empower Legacy. Elevate the Next 250 Years.

Hosted by MILVET, the symposium featured a keynote address by Dr. Amber Price, a powerful Hero's Journey workshop led by Corie Weathers, a main-stage panel exploring military spouse legacy and leadership, and breakout sessions focused on career readiness, networking, military marriages, and financial legacy.

EMSS was an opportunity to examine the important role military spouses play in civic leadership and to elevate their voices as leaders within their communities, workplaces, and families. Through the Empowering Military Spouses Symposium, William & Mary's Military & Veteran Affairs (MILVET) office seeks to strengthen connections, foster leadership development, and create spaces where military spouses can learn, grow, and build meaningful networks.

Designed by spouses for spouses, EMSS was created by a planning team of military spouses, veteran spouses, William & Mary alumni, faculty, and staff. Together, they developed a program focused on connection, leadership, and empowering military spouses to shape the next chapter of their communities and our nation.

A special thank you to our sponsors and partners whose support made EMSS possible, including Gold Partners Leidos and USAA; Silver Partners Amazon Military, Fiserv, First Command, and PenFed Credit Union; Bronze Partners Armed Forces Mutual, Busch Gardens Williamsburg & Water Country USA, Chesapeake Bank, and HCA Healthcare; and Contributing Partners the Greater Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce, Hampton Roads Workforce Council, Jodi Linney of Atlantic Sotheby's International Realty, Dr. Amber Price, Sentara, Starbucks, Towne Mortgage, William & Mary's Strategic Cultural Partnerships, and Williamsburg Concessions & Catering.

# Highlights

## International Maritime Officers Visit Campus with U.S. Coast Guard

In February and June, the Whole of Government Center of Excellence (WGC) welcomed international maritime officers participating in the U.S. Coast Guard's International Maritime Officers Course and International Maritime Domain Awareness Course for programming at William & Mary and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS).

Representing 21 partner nations, the officers engaged in whole-of-government instruction on topics including national influence, entrepreneurial thinking, planning for uncertainty, and decision-making in resource-constrained environments. At VIMS, participants explored maritime challenges such as spill response, illegal fishing, and the use of science to inform decision-making in complex marine environments.

## Student Veterans Attend the Upper Mattaponi Tribe's 37th Annual Powwow

On May 23, William & Mary student veterans and military-connected students attended the Upper Mattaponi Tribe's 37th Annual Powwow. The event offered an opportunity to celebrate Native American culture, connect with the local community, and honor the enduring contributions of veterans. A longstanding tribal tradition, the powwow includes special recognition of veterans and highlights the deep connections among military service, heritage, and community.

# One Tribe One Day 2026: MILVET Community Rallies in Support

This April, the W&M MILVET community came together for another successful One Tribe One Day (OTOD). We were honored to receive a generous $25,000 Challenge Gift from the Military & Veteran Affairs Advisory Group, helping inspire support for our mission and military-connected students.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of alumni, families, friends, faculty, staff, and supporters, we raised more than $38,000 in support of Military & Veteran Affairs initiatives. Every gift helps strengthen programs, resources, and opportunities that serve military-connected students, veterans, service members, and their families across the William & Mary community.

We are deeply grateful to the Advisory Group and to everyone who participated in One Tribe One Day. Your support continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

# W&M Whole of Government Center of Excellence

## WMGIC x PIT-UN Tech for Change Hackathon

On April 9–10, the W&MGlobal Innovation Challenge (WMGIC),a student group supported by WGC, hosted a 36-hour hackathon- style competition sponsored by the Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN).

The challenge brought together undergraduate students from around the world to develop technology-driven solutions to pressing global issues. Teams focused on one of two tracks: Narrative Power & the Architecture of Misunderstanding or Climate Stability, Security, and the Limits of Adaptation. Throughout the competition, students collaborated to create innovative public interest technology solutions aimed at advancing equity and addressing complex societal challenges.

Throughout the competition, students heard from keynote speakers on the growing importance of public interest technology in a rapidly changing world, participated in mentoring sessions with professionals from the public and privatesectors, andpresentedtheirsolutions toa panelof judges representing arangeofindustries.

## Summer 2026 National Security Internship Program

WGC continues to supporta strong pipeline ofnationalsecurityinternshipsthroughthe National Security Internship Program (NSIP). For Summer 2026, NSIP funding provided stipends to 43 William & Mary students serving across a
range of military, government, and national security organizations.

Students secured internships with organizations including Air Combat Command, the U.S. Army War College, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command G-2, U.S. Army Mad Scientist, the Virginia National Guard Cyber Fortress Exercise, the Maritime Industrial Base, and the U.S. European, Indo-Pacific, and Southern Commands. Additional opportunities included placements with the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Joint Innovation Lab at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Four W&M VICEROY Scholars were also selected for prestigious internships with Air Combat Command, the Army Research Laboratory, and Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific.

# ROTC Ambassador Recognized for Outstanding Service

LTCPatrickBillmann recently recognized William &Mary alumnaMary Beale Wheeler ’83 withaCertificate of Appreciation for her exceptional service as the Army ROTC Ambassador.

Through her volunteer leadership, Wheeler has played a key role in supporting the Army ROTC program. She organized the fall Trivia Night fundraiser, coordinated a send-off dinner and care packages for the Ranger Challenge team, and built a network of local sponsors for the Army ROTC One Tribe One Day challenge. She also spearheaded the Ruck Relay march, which contributed significantly to this year’s strong donor participation.

We are grateful for Mary Beale’s continued dedication and support of the Revolutionary Guard Battalion and the William & Mary Army ROTC community.

# Cadets Participate in Joint Field Training Exercise

TheRevolutionaryGuard Battalion recentlypartneredwithcadetsfrom HamptonUniversity,Norfolk State University, and Old Dominion University for a Joint Field Training Exercise focused on leadership, tactical proficiency, and teamwork.

Training in a realistic field environment challenged cadets to strengthen their communication, adaptability, and problem-solving skills while collaborating across Army ROTC programs. The exercise provided valuable opportunities to build confidence, develop leadership capabilities, and reinforce the Army values that guide future officers.

The Revolutionary Guard Battalion is proud to train alongside its regional partners and strengthen the relationships and skills that contribute to future mission success.

# Announcements

## Association of 1775

If you are amilitary, veteran, or civil service W&M alum who wants to give back to the College and current students, consider joining the Association of 1775, the College's military, veteran, and civil service alumni affinity group. We are seeking planning and event ideas as well as a Civil Service alumni volunteer to join our military service volunteer leads.

If you are interested in joining Ao 1775, supporting our growing community, or have questions, please contact Brit Erslev '97

## Wear Blue: Run to Remember Piestewa Challenge

On June 5, the William & Mary community came together for a meaningful run/walk that began with a Circle of Remembrance.

Join us on the first Saturday of each month in front of the Raymond A. Mason School of Business!

## Follow us on LinkedIn and Instagram!

**Clickthe icons tofollow and stay up to date on all things W&M Military & Veteran Affairs!**