

# Veteran Stories Video: Education Benefits

A quick video featuring 4 veterans briefly discussing their experience of applying for VA benefits, and issues they experienced when attempting to apply. The video will highlight common issues experienced by veterans.

The video is intended to be shown at the beginning of the Education Benefits module. It is intended to prime Learners to pay attention to certain topics during the instruction, in order to help them avoid common problems.

Below is a storyboard and rough script for each of the 4 veteran stories.

## Veteran #1

**Runtime:** 45 seconds



**Background:** *Hi, I'm Angela. I'm an Army veteran.*

**Situation:** *I transitioned a few years ago, and I already earned a bachelor's degree. A year ago, my daughter was applying for colleges. I wanted her to get my education benefits.*

**Problem:** *But, I didn't know how to transfer my benefits. It was more confusing than I thought it would be. I think I would have given up if I was doing it for myself, but my daughter needed those benefits.*

**Action:** *I worked with Veterans Affairs Officers to complete the application. The VA people were great. They helped me get through the frustrating process.*

**Result:** *I'm happy I got help, and my daughter got the Education benefits she needed. But I wish I had known of better ways to learn about the benefits and how to apply for them. It was stressful.*

**Lesson:** *You should try applying on your own, but it's true that applying for benefits can be confusing. If you want to transfer benefits but find it difficult, work with the VA to get help doing it.*

## Veteran #2

Runtime: 45 seconds



**Background:** *My name is Greg, and I'm an Iraq Veteran.*

**Situation:** *After transitioning out of service, I wanted to go back to school to get my master's degree.*

**Problem:** *I found a school that I wanted to attend and was accepted into the school. After starting my second semester, I found out about the Yellow Ribbon program, which would have let me save a lot of money on my degree. But, my school didn't participate.*

**Action:** *I found another school with the Yellow Ribbon program, but this time I confirmed it by calling their Veterans Affairs Office and speaking with a counselor. I transferred to my new school for the following semester.*

**Result:** *It was good that I transferred, but I spent over \$9,000 more than I needed to. I wasted a semester when I was between schools.*

**Lesson:** *If you're transitioning, you need to know about the Yellow Ribbon program. It can save you a lot of money.*

## Veteran #3

**Runtime:** 45 seconds



**Background:** *Hi, I'm Chris. I'm a Navy veteran.*

**Situation:** *I transitioned a few years ago and wanted to get my bachelor's degree.*

**Problem:** *But, I waited too long to start the application. I thought I could get everything done in a couple of weeks -- wrong. It took me at least two months, between the paperwork and phone calls to sort things out. I missed the deadline for application.*

**Action:** *I had to wait a full year before finishing my application and sending my complete application through. It was awful.*

**Results:** *But, after finishing the application and being extra careful to get everything right, I was granted my benefits. I'm happy to say that I'm halfway done with my degree. But I wish I had known to start the application earlier.*

**Lesson:** *Start your applications as early as you can. You never know if you'll hit a problem that will take time to get through.*

## Veteran #4

**Runtime:** 30 seconds



**Background:** *My name is Dan, and I served in Vietnam.*

**Situation:** *It's been decades since I left service. After calling the VA to help with something else, I learned from a VA Officer that I still had education benefits I could use. Apparently some of my benefits from the Montgomery GI Bill were available for me to use.*

**Problem:** *I thought that my education benefits were gone because I hadn't used them, and Montgomery GI Bill benefits expire after a while. But, I learned that some of my benefits had been converted to the Post 9/11 GI Bill -- which meant I could use them.*

**Action:** *I worked with Veterans Affairs Officers to learn how to take advantage of those benefits and take some classes at a community college.*

**Result:** *I've been taking classes for a year now. But, I wish I had learned that sooner.*

**Lesson:** *It's a good idea to check in about your benefits. Follow up about your benefits, even if it's been years. And if you don't know something, ask a VA person.*