

## **College gives special deal to Connecticut Legionnaires**

The Department of Connecticut has found a truly unique and innovative way to help student veterans - particularly Legionnaires - earn their college degrees.

Recently, officials from the department and its Auxiliary entered into a "workforce partnership" with [Goodwin College](#) to give Legion family members a 33 percent discount in tuition at the private, nonprofit institution located in East Hartford, Conn. The special rate is also available to family members of Legionnaires and Auxiliary and Sons members who claim Connecticut membership in their organizations.

"Supporting veterans and providing them with pathways to a college education is an objective for all of us at Goodwin," said Danielle Wilken, assistant vice president for Goodwin's Academic Affairs Department. "We are proud to partner with the American Legion and its Auxiliary in this effort, which we believe will benefit those who have served."

The agreement between Goodwin College and the Department of Connecticut was formed at the department's midwinter conference in January. It was announced earlier this month by the school.

Founded in 2004, Goodwin offers bachelor's and associate's degrees in a variety of study areas including business administration, nursing, dental hygiene and criminal studies. The college operates on a tri-semester schedule and gives full-time students a chance to earn a degree in three years, while offering weekend and evening classes to part-time students.

Department Commander Robert Murray says the school's programs give veterans a chance to enhance service-learned skills. "These are people who put their lives on the line for their country," Murray said. "When they come home, they now have an opportunity to get an education which they otherwise wouldn't have had in the civilian world."

The partnership is the product of a collaboration - and serendipitous meeting - between Past Department Commander Mary-Ann Bergeron-Roczynski and Michael Wolter, a Goodwin professor and director of the school's Management and Leadership program. Wolter is currently a professor to Bergeron-Roczynski, who is enrolled in Goodwin's Management and Leadership program as a student. Wolter pitched the idea to Bergeron-Roczynski and officials from Goodwin and the Department of Connecticut; it was met with resounding acceptance on both sides.

"It's a winning situation for everyone involved," Bergeron-Roczynski said. "The college gets the benefit of veterans taking classes and spreading the word about the program and in return the veterans get a valuable education. Small class sizes are an added plus, offering a welcoming environment veterans appreciate."

In addition to its partnership with the Legion, Goodwin is enrolled in the Yellow Ribbon Program, an opt-in initiative administered by VA which allows institutions to pledge

additional tuition aid to student veterans with no charge to their GI Bill benefits. The school also reports that many of its staff and faculty members are veterans.