

Free Testing Program for Military Helps Service Members Shorten the Path To A College Degree

Testing Service Brings College Credit Closer to Home

(NAPSA)—Busy military service members juggling career, family, and college study can more easily save time and money as they work toward their degrees thanks to a service offered by the College Board's College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), in partnership with the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES).

All military service members can now take free computer-based CLEP exams, which allow them to earn college credit for what they already know, at college test centers across the country. CLEP exams provide individuals the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of introductory college-level subjects. By earning successful scores on one of 35 CLEP exams, students can bypass introductory courses and receive credit for their knowledge.

Until recently, military service members could take a paper version of some CLEP exams free of charge only on military installations. This made access particularly challenging for National Guard and Reserve members who often do not live near a military base.

Instead of traveling across state—or over state lines—to a base, National Guard and Reservists may be able to visit their local college to take the funded exams. All test takers are expected to pay the testing college's administration fee but the \$55 exam fee is covered by a contract between the College Board and DANTES. Best of all, when service members have completed the 90-minute computer-based exam, they are provided with an instant score report.

Vicky Morrison spent 14 years as an Air Force recruiter and while she often used the Air Force's education benefits as a way to encourage recruits, it took some time before she could begin to earn an undergraduate degree herself. She already had two challenging jobs: serving as a recruiter and being a single mom. But Morrison persevered and took college classes wherever she was stationed.

"The College-Level Exam Program played an important role in helping me get my degree. I accelerated my graduation by earning 27 credits through CLEP exams," says Morrison. She earned CLEP



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

Taking a CLEP exam can provide the boost needed to graduate from college.

credits for her Spanish-speaking skills and the knowledge she obtained through training in the Air Force.

"CLEP is truly a way to advance yourself by applying the knowledge you've gained through on-the-job training, independent study, or life experience to earning that college degree. CLEP helped me earn credits efficiently and that gave me more time to spend with my son!"

In an average year, approximately 70,000 to 75,000 CLEP exams are administered across all branches of the military, including National Guard, Reserves, and Coast Guard. Since 1974, the examinations have been funded for all military service members and have helped more than two million service members earn credit toward a degree. CLEP has also helped more than six million civilians advance their college education since the program was created in 1967.

CLEP exams range in subject from English Composition to U.S. History, and include Biology and Spanish, among others. Exams are administered on computer at 1,300 college test centers; and 2,900 colleges grant credit based on CLEP scores. Each college and university sets its own CLEP policy so it is important for individuals to contact the college they plan to attend for information about the institution's policy.

For more information about CLEP and for a list of colleges administering the exams, visit www.collegeboard.com/clep.