

The New York City Department of Veterans' Services, CUNY Office of Veterans Affairs, and Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City Announce Collaboration with AT&T

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Partnership with AT&T helps send CUNY student veteran leaders to Student Veterans of America's 2020 National Conference in Los Angeles

NEW YORK – The New York City Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) and the City University of New York Office of Veterans Affairs have teamed up with the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City and AT&T to sponsor student veteran leaders, one from each CUNY undergraduate institution with a student veteran population size of 50 or more, to attend Student Veterans of America's 2020 National Conference (NatCon) in Los Angeles.

New York City's higher education ecosystem is a tremendous attractor of veteran talent, with more than 10,000 students using their GI Bill at various institutions across our City. Collectively, CUNY is home to the largest concentration of student veterans, with roughly 3,000 student veterans enrolled at CUNY schools throughout the five boroughs.

Students were selected to attend NatCon 2020 through AT&T's support by their respective school administrators. Candidates were selected based on their campus organization involvement and leadership roles.

"We wanted to find a hands-on way to connect our CUNY student veteran leaders with the tools and best practices they need to help their campus veteran organizations thrive", said **NYC Department of Veterans' Services Commissioner James Hendon**. "Student Veterans of America's annual National Conference is the premier experience in the country empowering students to build strong networks, both academic and professional, that lead to career success."

"AT&T is committed to helping veterans thrive in college and in the civilian workforce," said **Liz Segal, Executive Director, New York City External Affairs, AT&T**. "We're proud to be teaming up with the Department of Veterans' Services to ensure that CUNY's student veterans are able to attend this year's NatCon, where they can strengthen their professional networks and lay the foundation for the next step in their careers."

Each year, Student Veterans of America hosts NatCon, a gathering that is touted as the largest annual gathering of Post 9-11 veterans in the country. NatCon creates an invaluable opportunity for student veterans to learn from and network with more than 2,000 of their peers from across the country. The conference offers leadership and advocacy training, networking opportunities with C-level executives, more than 90 breakout sessions that encourage the sharing of best practices, and a "campus" event space featuring over 50 different corporate employers.

"The Mayor's Fund is so thrilled to partner with DVS, CUNY, and AT&T to empower these students on their professional and academic journeys," said **Toya Williford, Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund**

to Advance New York City. “Partnerships like this help create new opportunities for New Yorkers, and we are so grateful to AT&T for investing in the future of New York City’s student veteran leaders.”

“Veterans are some of the most civically-engaged students you’ll meet,” said **Lisa Beatha, Director of the CUNY Office of Veterans Affairs.** “Ensuring CUNY schools are robustly represented at NatCon is not only beneficial to the schools they attend, but to our City as a whole because of their leadership and propensity to give back to their local communities.”

“This effort is a testament to the power of partnerships,” said **Cassandra Alvarez, Associate Commissioner, Public-Private Partnerships** with DVS. “Having attended NatCon for the last few years, our office fully understands the value this experience can provide to our warrior scholars.”

AT&T is the principal funder of this partnership with additional generosity provided by A&E Networks and the Schultz Family Foundation. The Student Veterans of America 2020 National Conference will take place at the JW Marriott in Los Angeles from January 4th through January 6.

About the New York City Department of Veterans' Services

The New York City's Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) strives to improve the lives of all veterans and their families, regardless of discharge status. DVS operates as a centralized hub able to put veterans at the center of all our efforts, coordinating services with a range of agencies at the City, state, and federal level, as well as through public-private partnerships. Our mission is straightforward: to foster purpose-driven lives for NYC service members, veterans, and their families through effective connections with the NYC community; targeted advocacy at the local, state, and national level; compassionate service, ensuring we make it easier to access services and benefits they've earned. We believe veterans are civic assets whose strength and demonstrated commitment to public service help NYC thrive.

For more information on the New York City Department of Veterans' Services, please visit our website at www.nyc.gov/vets, visit us at 1 Centre Street, Suite 2208, New York, NY, call 212-416-5250, or follow us on social media @nycveterans.

About the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization working with over 30 City agencies and offices, 300 institutional funders, and 100 community-based partners.

The Mayor's Fund and its partners advance **initiatives** that improve the lives of New Yorkers from all walks of life and across all five boroughs. In particular, the Mayor's Fund has made strategic investments to promote mental health services for all New Yorkers, increase workforce development opportunities for young New Yorkers, and meet the needs of New York City's diverse immigrant community.

The Mayor's Fund is chaired by First Lady Chirlane McCray and governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor. In addition, the Mayor's Fund has an Advisory Board comprised of prominent civic and business leaders appointed by the Mayor to advise and assist the Board of Directors.

About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T

AT&T Inc. is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. The company's signature philanthropic initiative, AT&T Aspire, drives innovation in education to promote student success in school and beyond. With a financial commitment of \$500 million since 2008, AT&T is leveraging technology, relationships and social innovation to help all students make their biggest dreams a reality.

About the City University of New York (CUNY)

The City University of New York is the nation's largest urban public university, a transformative engine of social mobility that is a critical component of the lifeblood of New York City. Founded in 1847 as the nation's first free public institution of higher education, CUNY today has [seven community colleges](#), [11 senior colleges](#) and [seven graduate or professional institutions](#) spread across New York City's five boroughs, serving 275,000 students and awarding 55,000 degrees each year. CUNY's mix of quality and affordability propels almost six times as many low-income students into the middle class and beyond as all the Ivy League colleges combined. More than 80 percent of the University's graduates stay in New York, contributing to all aspects of the city's economic, civic and cultural life and diversifying the city's workforce in every sector. CUNY's graduates and faculty have received many prestigious honors, including 13 Nobel Prizes and 26 MacArthur "Genius" Grants. The University's historic mission continues to this day: provide a first-rate public education to all students, regardless of means or background.