

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

Veterans Resource and Opportunities Center (VROC)

Program Context (suggested word limit 400)

Mission (100 word limit)

1. How does your program align with the college and district mission?
https://smccd.edu/dpgc/files/dsgc-DistrictMission.pdf https://canadacollege.edu/about/mission.php
The Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) aligns directly with Cañada College's and the San Mateo County Community College District's (SMCCD) commitment to social justice, equity, and educational access by providing specialized advocacy, educational guidance, and wraparound support for Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF). VROC empowers SMVF students to achieve their academic, career, transfer, and personal goals by mitigating the systemic barriers associated with military-to-civilian transition, streamlining benefit utilization, and facilitating institutional navigation.
Grounded in a Transformational Antiracist Leadership (TAL) framework, VROC intentionally validates and honors the intersecting identities of our military-connected population—including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, citizenship status, disability, low-income background, and branch of service. VROC addresses historical and institutional equities by dismantling structural friction points in certification, expanding resource access, and elevating campus-wide cultural competency surrounding the socio-academic experiences of student veterans both inside and outside the classroom.

Program Description (500 word limit)

2. Provide a brief description of your program, what does your program do and who does your program serve?
VROC uses the designation **Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF)** to define its core constituency at Cañada College. SMVF encompasses active-duty personnel, reservists, National Guard members, veterans, and military dependents/dependents using transferred benefits. VROC serves as a centralized, equity-centered hub offering specialized support services throughout the student lifecycle:

1. **Admissions & Matriculation Support:** Streamlined onboarding and priority registration assistance.
2. **Benefit Navigation & Certification:** Chapter 30, 31, 33, 35, and 1606 GI Bill® processing and compliance guidance.
3. **Dedicated Counseling & Advising:** Academic counseling, Student Educational Plan (SEP) adjustments, and personal support referrals.
4. **Financial Literacy & Emergency Relief:** Vet Vouchers (books, food, transportation), financial coaching via SparkPoint, and work-study opportunities.
5. **Campus & Community Integration:** Direct warm handoffs to the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Personal Counseling Center (PCC), Colts-U Transfer Center, and Career Center.

Chart 1

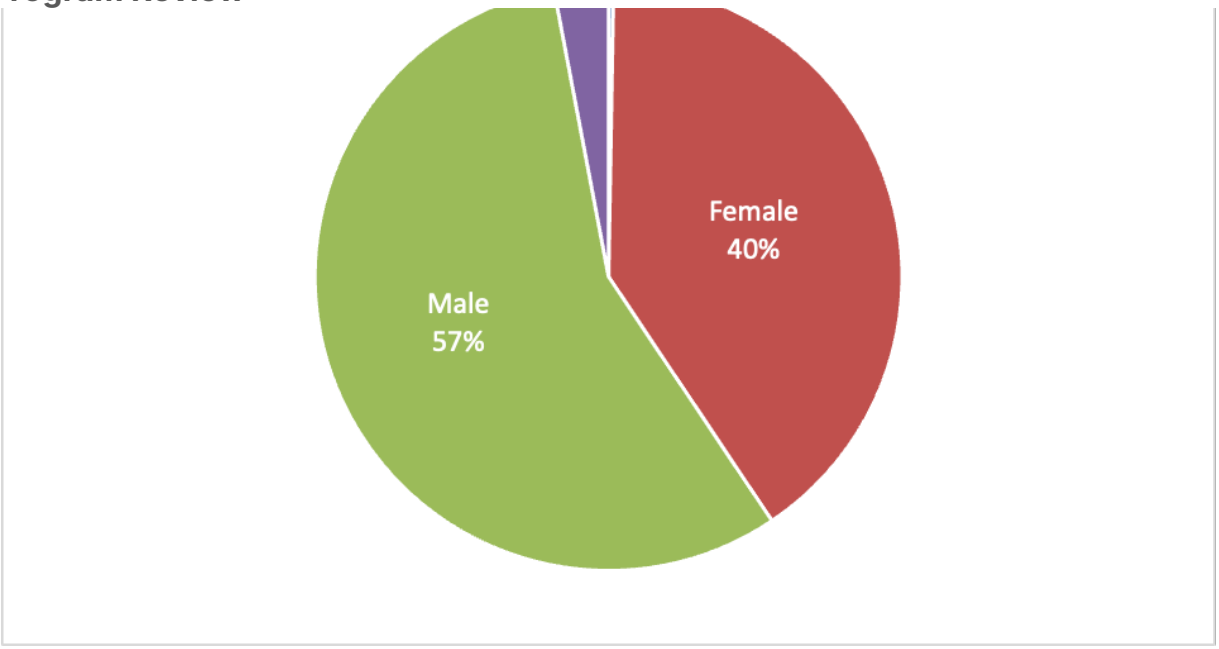
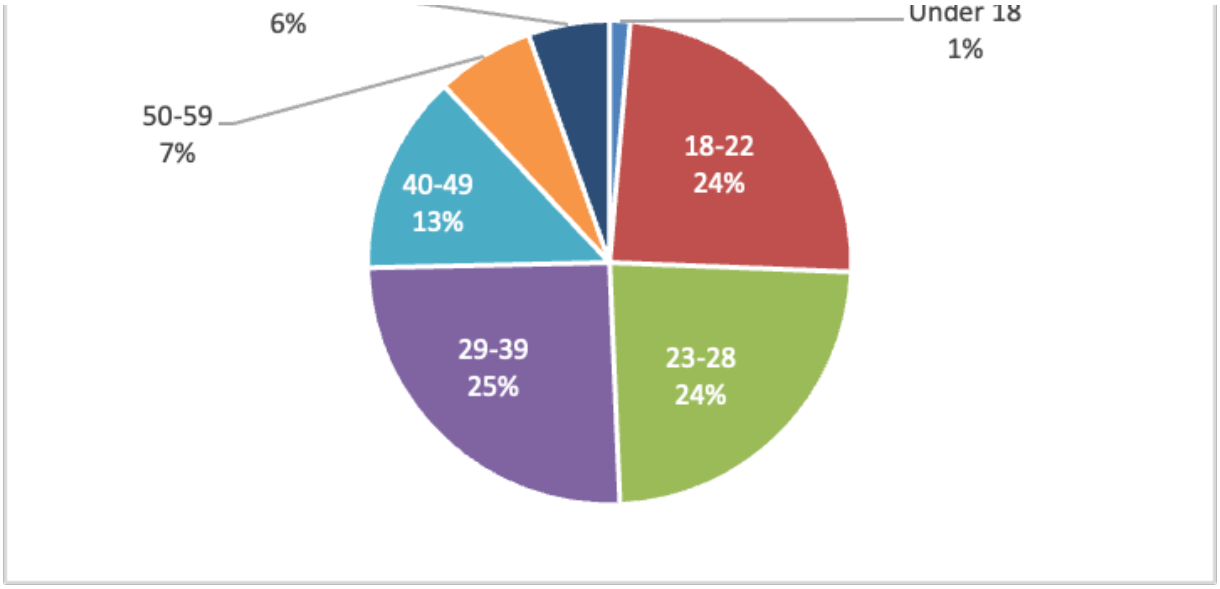


Chart 2



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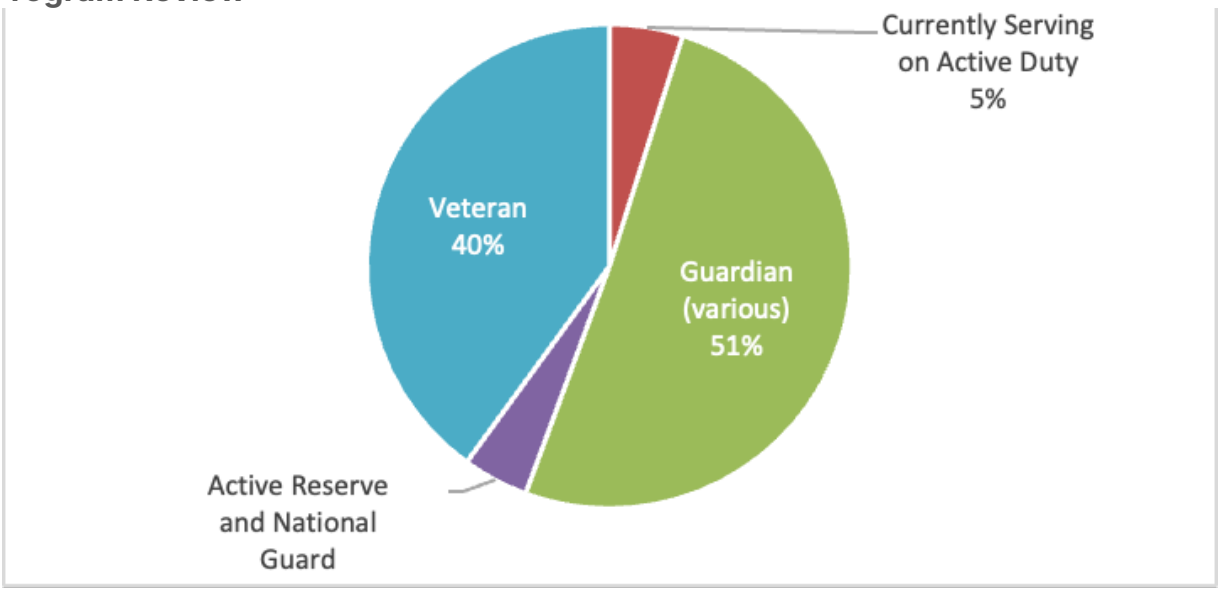
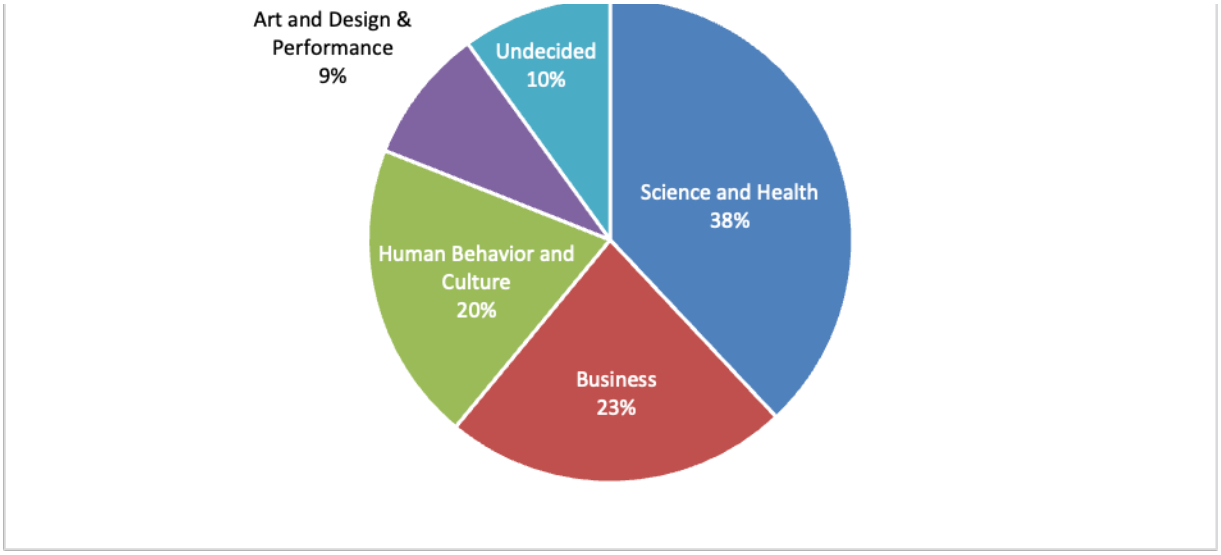


Chart 4



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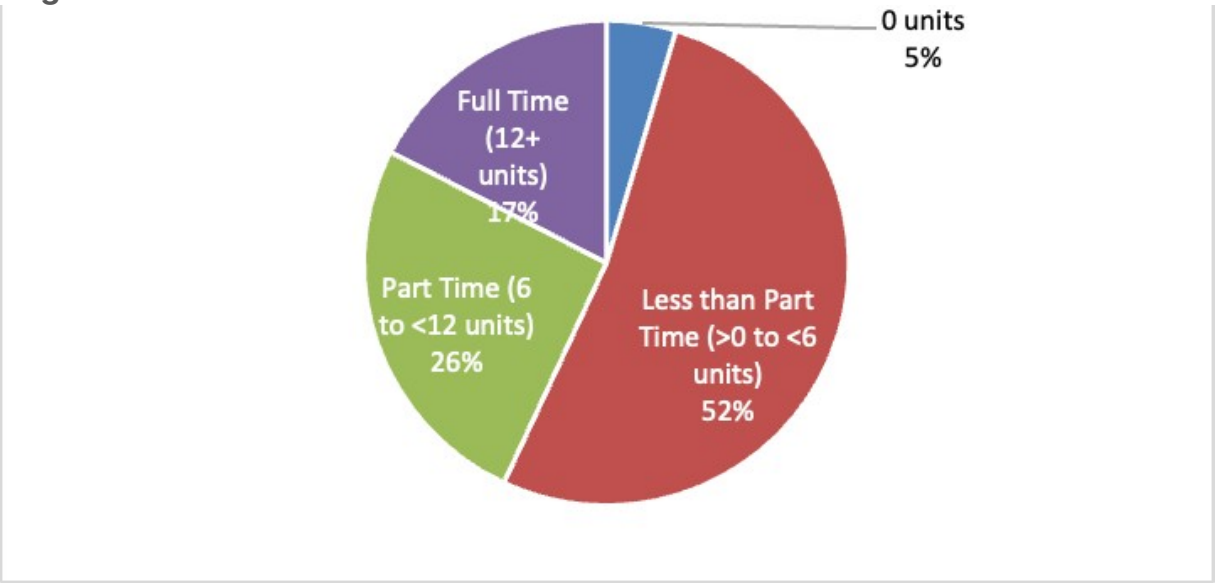
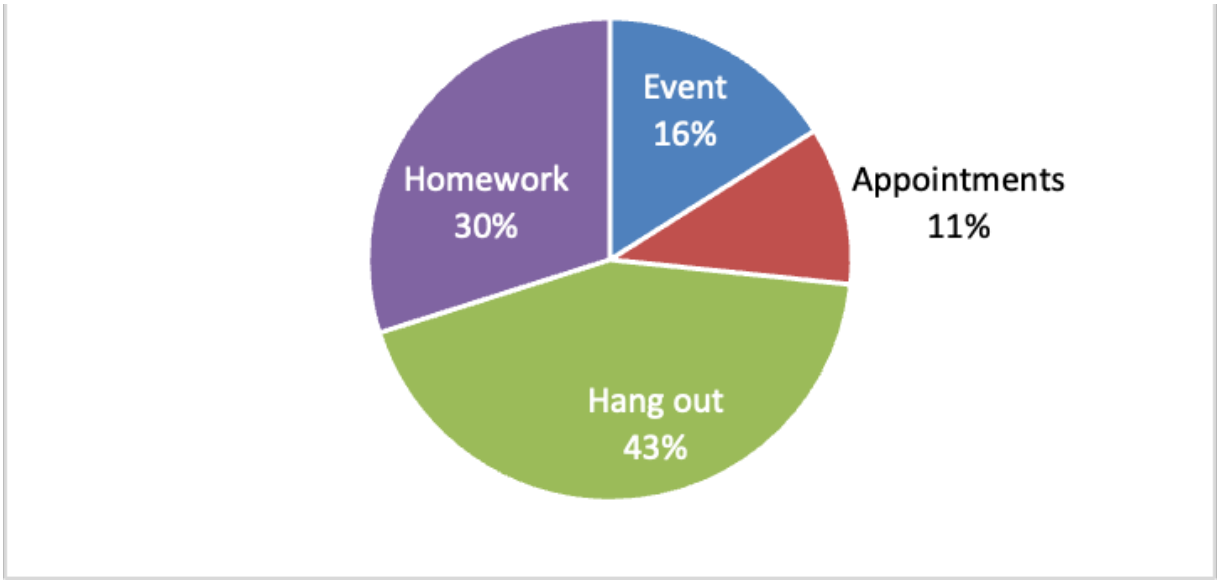


Chart 6



Assessing Program Impact on Diverse Student Populations (Suggested word limit 750)

3. How many students are served by your program?

Over the past three academic years, the Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) served a consistent population of Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF), recording unduplicated headcounts of **134 students in AY 2023–24**, **127 students in AY 2024–25**, and **140 students in AY 2025–26** (see *Charts 7 & 8*).

Enrollment trends correlate closely with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) rate adjustments. An increase in MHA rates drove higher enrollment in AY 2023–24, followed by a minor contraction in AY 2024–25 corresponding to lower allowance rates. In AY 2025–26, enrollment rebounded as regional outreach and student engagement expanded.

Student Classification & VA Benefit Framework

VROC categorizes military-connected students into two administrative classifications:

- **Certified Students:** SMVF students receiving VA educational assistance under Title 38 who have been formally verified and submitted to the VA by Cañada College's School Certifying Official (SCO).
- **Non-Certified Students:** Military-connected students, veterans, or dependents who do not utilize VA educational benefits or are ineligible for certification.

Certified students receive funding through specific federal benefit programs (commonly designated by their statutory chapter under Title 38):

- **Chapter 33 (Post-9/11 GI Bill®):** The most widely used benefit, providing tuition assistance, a monthly housing allowance, and a books/supplies stipend.
- **Chapter 31 (Veteran Readiness & Employment - VR&E):** Comprehensive support, tuition coverage, and career transition services for veterans with service-connected disabilities.
- **Chapter 35 (Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance):** Education and training opportunities for eligible dependents of veterans who are permanently disabled or deceased as a result of service.
- **Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill® - Active Duty):** Educational assistance for active-duty members who enrolled and paid into the benefit system.
- **Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill® - Selected Reserve):** Funding for actively serving members of the Selected Reserve and National Guard.

Enrollment Stability & Identification Factors

Because self-identification during the college application process is voluntary, the actual military-connected population at Cañada College likely exceeds recorded administrative counts (see *Chart 9*). Despite external policy and financial shifts, term-to-term persistence remained exceptionally stable, with **248 SMVF students enrolled in Fall 2025** and **242 SMVF students enrolled in Spring 2026**. This steady retention underscores the impact of VROC's dedicated support services, benefit navigation, community-building activities, and campus-wide resource partnerships.

Gender Breakdown	~66% Male / ~34% Female & Non-Binary	~78% Male / ~22% Female
Age Distribution	24% (Ages 18–22) / 50% (Ages 23–39)	12% (Ages 18–22) / 68% (Ages 23–39)
SMVF Affiliation	51% Dependents / 40% Veterans / 9% Active/Reserve	100% Certified Veterans/ Service Members
Top Interest Areas	38% Science & Health / 23% Business / 20% Human Behavior	42% Science & Health / 28% Business / 18% Human Behavior
Unit Load	52% (< 6 units) / 31% (6–11.5 units) / 17% (12+ units)	38% (< 6 units) / 34% (6–11.5 units) / 28% (12+ units)
Primary VROC Engagement	43% visit primarily for community building & peer connection	58% visit for benefit compliance & study space

Chart 7

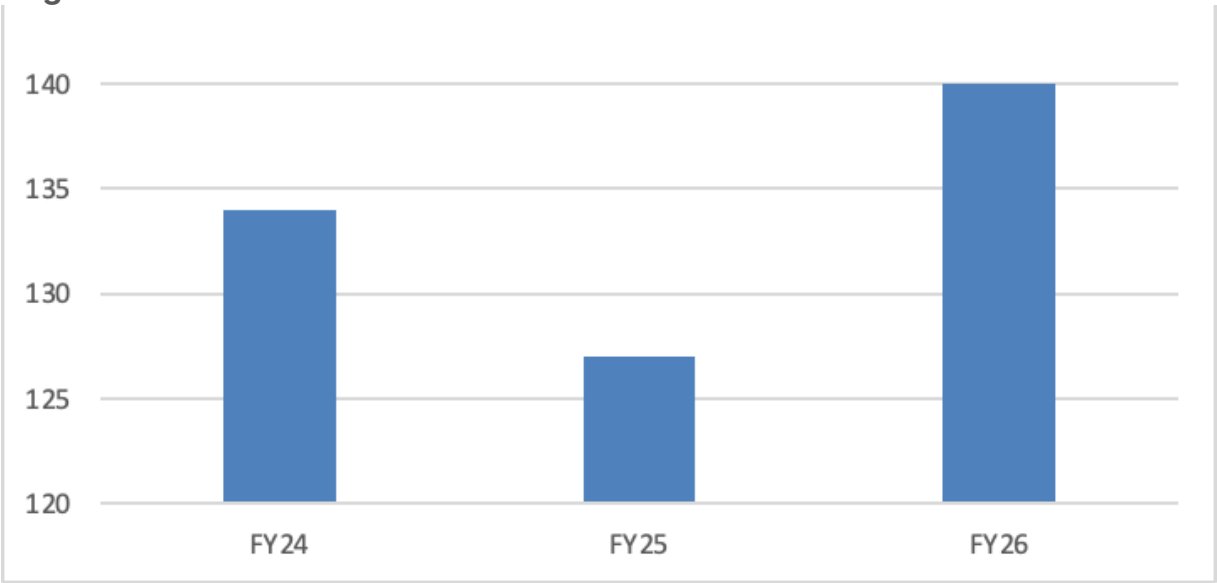
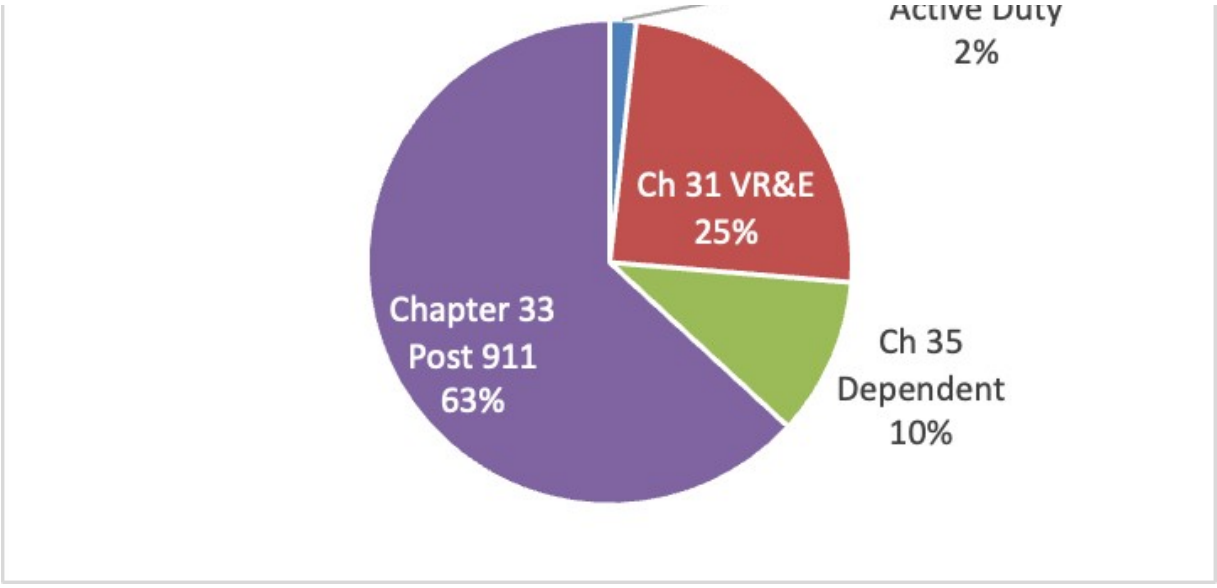


Chart 8

SMVF Student Enrollment by Academic Year (unduplicated)

AY23-24	AY24-25	AY25-26
134	127	140

Chart 9



4. How does your program intentionally serve underrepresented, disproportionately impacted or racially minoritized students (ie. Black and/or Indigenous People of Color; Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual; 1st Gen; Foster; Homeless; Undocumented; Veteran; Low-Income; or other disproportionately impacted student populations identified in our Student Equity data, etc.)? Support this with data.

Serving Underrepresented, Disproportionately Impacted, and Racially Minoritized Students

While **100% of students supported by the Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC)** are military-connected—comprising Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF)—they represent a vibrant, diverse cohort with complex intersecting identities. Grounded in a **Transformational Antiracist Leadership (TAL)** framework, VROC intentionally fosters a culturally validating environment where students are welcomed, respected, and championed regardless of race, ethnicity, citizenship status, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, or military branch. Student veterans and military dependents are formally recognized as disproportionately impacted (DI) due to the compounding socio-academic challenges associated with transitioning from military culture into higher education. Within Cañada College's SMVF population, these DI identities frequently intersect:

- **Racial & Ethnic Diversity:** Based on recent institutional data (AY 2025–26), **72% of SMVF students identified as racially or ethnically minoritized**, including **35% Hispanic/Latino**, **7% Black/African American**, **12% Asian/Pacific Islander/Filipino**, and **18% Multiracial/Other** backgrounds. VROC directly advances Cañada College's mission as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI).
- **Intersectionality & Socioeconomic Factors:** Many SMVF students simultaneously navigate first-generation college status, low-income household backgrounds, service-connected physical or psychological disabilities, and single or primary parenting responsibilities.

Systemic Barriers Addressed by VROC

To close persistence and achievement gaps, VROC intentionally targets the unique structural, socio-economic, and cultural friction points experienced by student veterans:

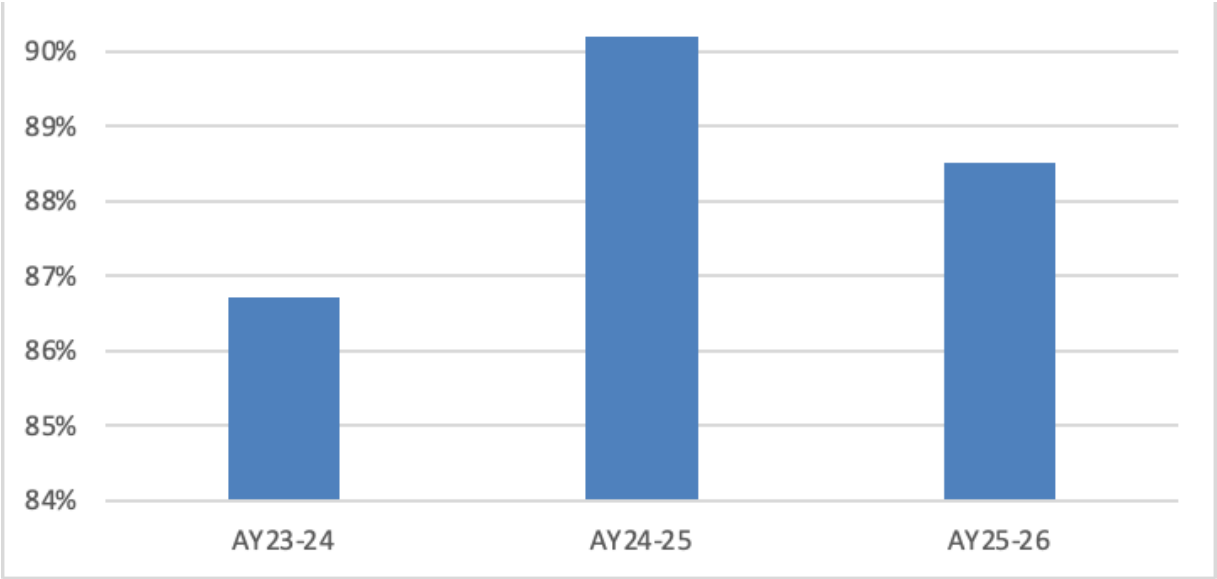
1. **Non-Traditional Academic Transitions:** As adult learners returning to school after extended breaks, SMVF students often encounter unfamiliar instructional modalities (e.g., Canvas LMS, Zero Textbook Cost/OER materials, hybrid coursework) and may feel culturally isolated in classrooms dominated by traditional, younger peers.
2. **Economic & Family Commitments:** Many SMVF students balance full-time employment, childcare responsibilities, or financial hardship while awaiting federal benefit distribution, requiring flexible service delivery options (e.g., virtual advising, study lab facilities, and emergency Vet Vouchers).
3. **Complex Federal System Navigation:** Translating military training into academic credit and navigating multi-layered federal VA benefit systems (educational, medical, and housing) creates substantial administrative fatigue. VROC provides dedicated, one-on-one advocacy to eliminate these compliance and certification barriers.

By providing personalized academic counseling, peer-to-peer VA Work-Study mentorship, warm handoffs to campus partners (DRC, SparkPoint, Personal Counseling Center), and culturally reflective programming, VROC proactively removes institutional barriers—ensuring equitable access, sense of belonging, and goal completion for all military-connected students.

5. How has student access, retention, and completion changed (where applicable) for this program during this review cycle?

Retention rates for SMVF students over the past three annual years were 87%, 90% and 89%. For the most part, retention has remained steady.

Chart 10



6. How does your Student Services program deliver its services to ensure accessibility and effectiveness for all students? Please detail the range of delivery methods offered (e.g., in person, online, hybrid, evening, in the community, etc.)

To ensure maximum accessibility and effectiveness for all military-connected students, the Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) employs a flexible, multi-modal service delivery model tailored to the needs of non-traditional learners, working adults, and students with service-connected disabilities.

Multi-Modal Service Delivery

VROC provides comprehensive support across in-person, virtual, and asynchronous channels:

- In-Person Services: Dedicated drop-in support, computer lab access, specialized study space, on-site academic counseling, and peer-to-peer mentorship facilitated by VA Work-Study students.
- Virtual & Distance Support: Synchronous remote counseling appointments via Zoom, interactive technology integration using the dedicated VROC Zoom Bar, and direct advising via email.
- Asynchronous Learning & Communication: Continuous access to resources, and program announcements through the districtwide Veteran Canvas shell.
- Outreach & Community Building: Campus tabling, veteran-focused educational workshops, academic transfer roundtables, and community networking events.
- Specialized Wraparound Referrals: Warm handoffs to key institutional and community partners, including the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Personal Counseling Center (PCC), SparkPoint, Colts-U Transfer Center, and local VA healthcare systems.

Inclusive Physical Infrastructure & Continuity of Operations

Program Review

The physical VROC facility serves as a welcoming, accessible campus hub designed to foster peer connection and academic success. Equipping the space with technology, quiet study areas, and direct access to specialized veteran counseling helps alleviate barriers for students balancing complex military, work, and personal schedules.
During the federal government shutdown in October 2025—which severely restricted Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) communication channels and regional office operations—VROC maintained continuous local support pipelines.

7. What is the breakdown of students you serve by educational goal disaggregated by race? How does your program support transfer students towards achieving their goal?

Based on the PRIE report, over 90% of SMVF students served are either Hispanic / Latino or White Non-Hispanic. One out of three are in the Science and Health Interest Areas, one in four are in the Business Interest Area and and one in five are in the Human Behavior and Culture Interest Area.

Chart 11

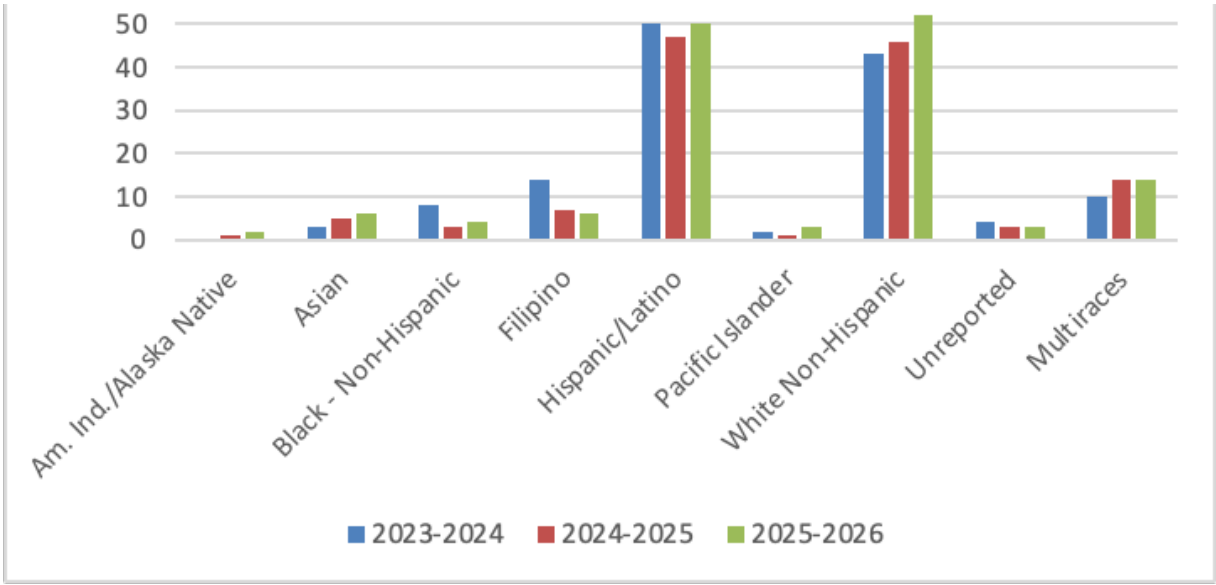
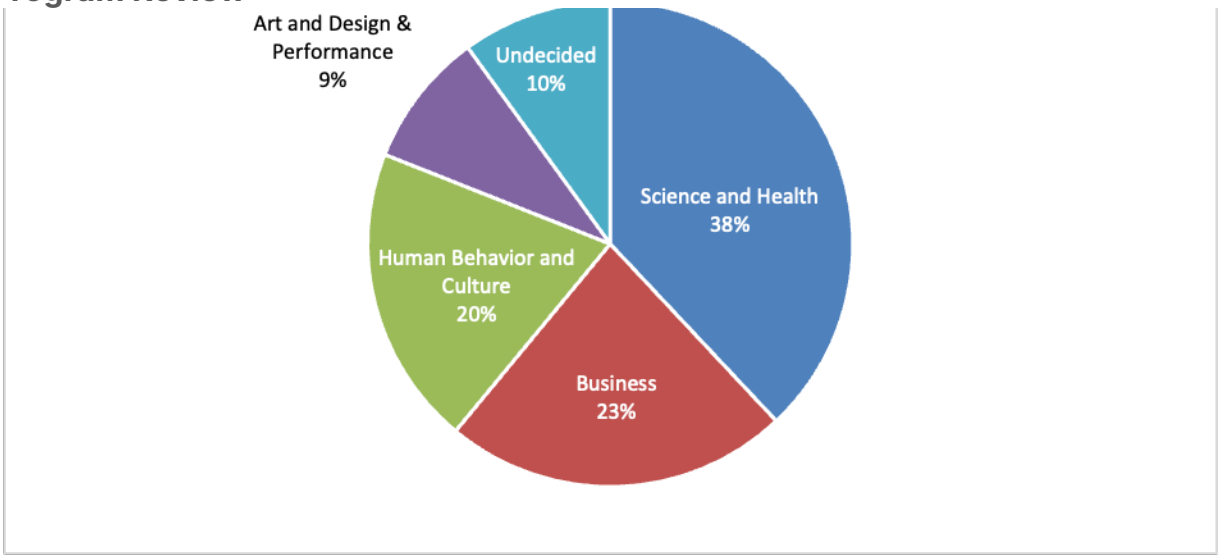


Chart 12



The VROC supports transfer students towards achieving their goal by providing zoom meetings with university Veteran Resource Centers to ensure the SMVF student knows that there is support once they transfer. We have also invited educational nonprofits like Service 2 School and Warrior Scholars Project who offer mentorship and workshops for students interested in transferring to a four year university.

8. What data and/or feedback do you use to evaluate the success of these delivery methods?

The VROC evaluates the effectiveness of its service delivery methods through a combination of quantitative student outcome data and qualitative student feedback. Quantitatively, the program reviews the number of military-connected students served, utilization of VA educational benefits, student participation in VROC programming and events, retention rates, withdrawal rates, and educational goal attainment. We also use PRIE reports to determine the retention rates.

Qualitative feedback is collected through SAO assessment surveys (results provided in Question 19 response), informal student conversations, event evaluations, and direct feedback received during counseling appointments and drop-in visits. The SAO surveys assess students' awareness of campus support services, understanding of VA educational benefit requirements, and satisfaction with VROC communications and service delivery. Results are used to improve outreach efforts, strengthen communication regarding certification requirements and deadlines, and expand access to resources through the districtwide Veteran Canvas shell, email communication, and in-person support.

9. Provide examples of your on-campus and/or off-campus community partnerships and how they support student success.

Key Partnerships include:

VA Palo Alto Health Care System: On-site and telehealth mental health and primary care coordination.
NorCal College SMVF Coalition & Region 3/4 VRC Consortium: Monthly regional inter-college coordination to refine best practices.

San Mateo Vet Center: Confidential readjustment counseling for combat veterans and families.
SparkPoint: On-campus financial coaching, food pantry access, and public benefit enrollment.
VA Readiness & Employment (VR&E / Chapter 31): Dedicated vocational rehabilitation counselor webinars and case management.
Additional On-campus resources: DRC, EOPS, Financial Aid, Career Center, Puente, Umoja, Transfer Center, etc....

10. How does your program support Cañada College as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) designated institution? Please support your answer with qualitative or quantitative data and/or specific examples
The Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) actively advances Cañada College's designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) by delivering equitable access, culturally responsive advocacy, and intentional programming tailored to a diverse military-connected community.

Demographic Alignment (AY 2025–26)

During the 2025–2026 academic year, VROC served **140 unduplicated SMVF students**, reflecting a rich diversity of racial and ethnic backgrounds that closely align with the college's equity mission (*see Chart 13*):

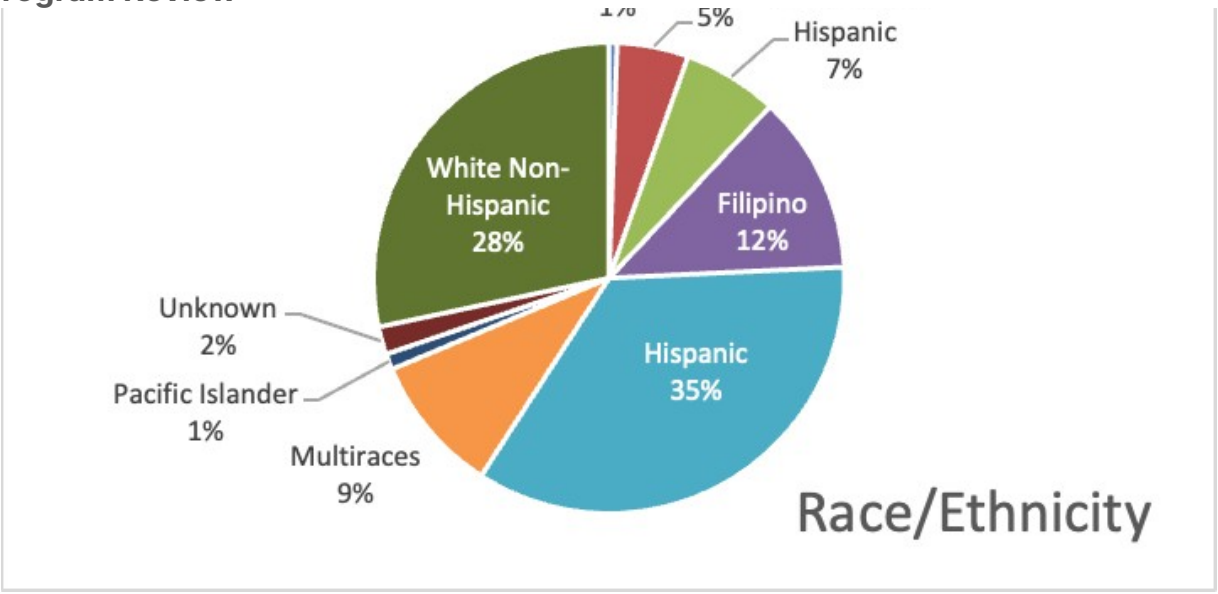
- **35%** Hispanic / Latino
- **28%** White Non-Hispanic
- **7%** Black / African American
- **30%** Asian, Filipino, Pacific Islander, Native American, Multiracial, and other underrepresented backgrounds

Culturally Responsive Programming & Belonging

Grounded in a Transformational Antiracist Leadership (TAL) framework, VROC creates intentional spaces for student success, representation, and community building by intersecting military culture with racial and social justice awareness:

- **Targeted Cultural Programming:** Organized campus-wide educational symposiums and commemorative presentations highlighting underrepresented military histories, including **African American Service Members**, **Women Veterans**, and the systemic challenges faced by **Deported Veterans**.
- **Intersectionality & Representation:** Fostered validating environments where military-connected students with minoritized identities see their lived experiences reflected in curriculum, programming, and student support spaces.
- **Cross-Campus Partnerships:** Collaborated with learning communities, equity programs, and student services across Cañada College to promote retention, sense of belonging, and equitable academic goal completion.

Chart 13


5%
Hispanic
7%
White Non-
Hispanic
28%
Filipino
12%
Unknown
2%
Hispanic
35%
Pacific Islander
1%
Multiraces
9%
Race/Ethnicity



Looking Back: Accomplishments and Challenges (Suggested word limit 400)

11. Describe major accomplishments since the last program review cycle.

1. Districtwide Veterans Coordinators, Registrars, Certifying Officials and Managers meet once a month to discuss certification and enrollment challenges and solutions.
2. Maintained the VROC's designation as an official VA Work-Study site, creating meaningful on-campus employment opportunities for student military veterans and families (SMVF). The program allows eligible students to receive wages funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs while gaining valuable professional experience, expanding service capacity, and reducing personnel costs within the VROC operating budget. In the 25-26 school year, two Student Assistants were hired. For the 26-27 school year, three Student Assistants have been hired.
3. The VROC was revitalized with fresh paint and military branch seals to enhance the student veteran experience. The red wall was intentionally chosen to honor the

sacrifices of service members and create an environment where veterans can feel represented, respected, and connected

4. Enhanced the VROC's technology infrastructure with a Zoom Bar video conferencing system, allowing seamless virtual meetings, training, and workshops. The upgrade improves communication, accessibility, and engagement with students, campus departments, and veteran-serving organizations.
5. Conferences attended by VROC staff:
    1. Calvet Leadership summit - Annual
    2. Western Association of Veterans Education Specialists (WAVES) Conference Annual
    3. California Community Colleges Veterans Summit, Annual
    4. San Mateo County Leadership Academy, 25-26 Academic year
6. Organized recurring ruck walks to promote physical wellness, camaraderie, and peer connection among veterans, military-connected students, and allies. These events foster community building, resilience, and opportunities for informal support outside the classroom
7. Expanded the VROC's outreach efforts through a dedicated Instagram presence, providing students with timely information about benefits, events, campus resources, deadlines, and veteran-focused opportunities. The platform serves as an additional communication channel to increase student engagement and awareness.
8. VROC Coordinator served as Co-Chair of the Student Services Planning Council, helping guide institutional planning, resource allocation, and student success initiatives while advocating for the needs of military-connected students within broader campus discussions.
9. VROC Coordinator successfully completed the San Mateo County Leadership Academy, strengthening leadership, collaboration, and community engagement skills while expanding professional networks across the county's education, nonprofit, and public service sectors.
10. VROC staff collaborated with district leadership to ensure Veterans Day was observed on its actual date, reinforcing the significance of the holiday and providing an opportunity for the college community to honor veterans on the nationally recognized day of remembrance.
11. Partnered with Picture Motion to bring an advance screening of a film to campus prior to its public release, creating a unique educational and community engagement opportunity that promoted meaningful discussion around veteran and military-related themes.

12. Developed partnerships with UCLA, St. Mary's College, SFSU, and SJSU Veteran Resource Centers to share best practices and strengthen services that support the success of student veterans and military-connected students.
13. Supported annual student volunteer participation at Fleet Week San Francisco to encourage civic engagement, leadership development, and community service. These extracurricular experiences provide students with opportunities to showcase involvement, initiative, and service when applying to four-year institutions and other post-graduation opportunities.

12. How did your accomplishments help to close the opportunity gap for disproportionately impacted, underserved or racially minoritized students as identified in the current SEAP plan? Support this with qualitative and quantitative data.

Advancing Equity & Closing Opportunity Gaps

The Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) intentionally fosters diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging by delivering monthly educational presentations that highlight the historic and contemporary contributions, experiences, and challenges of service members and veterans of color. These programs illuminate underrepresented military histories, encourage constructive dialogue across faculty, staff, and students, and ensure military-connected students from minoritized backgrounds see their lived experiences validated. By honoring the diverse identities within the military community, VROC cultivates an inclusive campus environment and strengthens student sense of belonging.
Consistent, dedicated coordination within VROC has significantly reduced administrative and cultural barriers for Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF)—a student population highly represented among disproportionately impacted groups identified in Cañada College's Student Equity and Achievement Plan (SEAP). Student veterans navigate distinct intersectional challenges, including non-traditional age transitions, service-connected disabilities, financial precarity, readjustment-related mental health needs, family caregiving responsibilities, and bureaucratic federal systems.

Culturally Responsive Leadership & Targeted Interventions

VROC delivers individualized, high-touch support designed to streamline VA benefit certification, simplify educational technology adoption, and facilitate direct warm handoffs to essential campus resources:

- **Digital Equity & Academic Readiness:** Targeted onboarding assists adult learners and re-entry veterans in navigating online platforms, Canvas LMS, and digital courseware.
- **Accessibility & Accommodations:** Direct coordination with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and the VA helps veterans with service-connected disabilities understand, request, and utilize academic accommodations and medical support.
- **Relatable, Culturally Grounded Advocacy:** Spearheaded by a dedicated Coordinator who is a military veteran holding a Master's degree in Ethnic Studies, VROC leverages lived experience and academic expertise to establish immediate trust and credibility. This combination of shared military background and culturally responsive practice bridges cultural divides, empowers students to navigate institutional systems, and directly supports persistence, retention, and completion goals.

13. Describe major challenges since the last program review cycle. How have these challenges contributed to the expansion or continuation of equity gaps?

1. ## Structural Challenges & Equity Impacts
2. **Shared Staffing Model (50/50 Split):** The Coordinator position is currently divided 50/50 with Academic Notice. As the SMVF population and programming needs expand, half-time staffing limits outreach, proactive case management, and targeted intervention for DI student veterans.

3. **Regional MHA Disparities:** Campus zip code designations place Cañada College under a lower VA Monthly Housing Allowance rate (~$450/month less than nearby sister campuses), creating acute housing insecurity for low-income veterans.
4. **Certification Bottlenecks & Federal Outages:** Past staffing turnover in the SCO role and federal shutdown disruptions caused certification backlogs, increasing student anxiety and financial strain.

14. Please list the goals you worked on during the previous program review cycle and describe any progress towards achieving those goals?

The VROC made substantial progress in expanding student support, partnerships, and engagement opportunities for SMVF students. Key accomplishments included strengthening partnerships with the VA, Vet Center, VR&E, SparkPoint, and regional veteran organizations; enhancing transfer pathways through collaboration with university Veteran Resource Centers; increasing outreach through social media, workshops, and the Veteran Canvas shell; maintaining VA Work-Study employment opportunities; and creating leadership and community engagement experiences. Facility improvements and expanded culturally responsive programming further improved accessibility, student engagement, and sense of belonging.

Impact of Resource Allocations Process (Suggested word limit 250)

15. Describe the impact to date of previously requested resources (staff, non-instructional assignment, equipment, facilities, research, funding) including both resource requests that were approved and were not approved.

1.0FTE to provide coverage for VROC services - not approved

The absence of a dedicated 1.0 FTE VROC Coordinator directly restricts operational capacity, limiting consistent center coverage, proactive outreach, and individualized case management for SMVFs. This staffing gap disproportionately impacts student veterans navigating compounding socio-academic challenges—including first-generation college status, service-connected disabilities, financial precarity, readjustment-related mental health needs, and the military-to-civilian transition.

4 Student laptops to be used in the VROC study room - not approved

Not receiving funding for dedicated student laptops in the VROC study center creates a direct digital equity barrier for SMVFs. Many student veterans navigate long daily commutes, economic hardship, and a lack of reliable personal technology. Without accessible hardware in the VROC space, students face significant obstacles in completing coursework, participating in virtual appointments, accessing online academic resources, and managing VA benefit portals. Unaddressed, this hardware deficiency undermines academic persistence, course completion, and equitable educational access for under-resourced student veterans.

16. How have these resources (or lack of resources) affected disproportionately impacted students/clients?

The lack of a **dedicated 1.0 FTE staff member** has limited the VROC's ability to provide consistent coverage, outreach, and individualized support for student veterans. Many of our students are disproportionately impacted due to factors such as first-generation status, disabilities, financial hardship, mental health challenges, and the transition from military to academic life. Limited staffing reduces appointment availability, follow-up communication, and program development, which can create barriers to accessing critical services and campus resources.

Specifically, operating under a half-time staffing model creates critical institutional friction points:

- **Reduced Appointment Capacity:** Constrains availability for specialized academic advising, benefit certification counseling, and personalized onboarding.

- **Delayed Follow-Up Communication:** Hinders timely intervention and proactive case management during critical registration, add/drop, and VA compliance windows.
- **Restricted Programmatic Growth:** Limits the bandwidth required to expand equity-focused programming, green zone campus trainings, and structured cross-campus partner collaborations.

Not receiving funding for dedicated **student laptops** in the VROC study center creates a direct digital equity barrier for SMVFs. Many student veterans navigate long daily commutes, economic hardship, and a lack of reliable personal technology. Without accessible hardware in the VROC space, students face significant obstacles in completing coursework, participating in virtual appointments, accessing online academic resources, and managing VA benefit portals. Unaddressed, this hardware deficiency undermines academic persistence, course completion, and equitable educational access for under-resourced student veterans. Despite these limitations, the VROC continues to maximize available resources to support student veterans; however, approval of these requests would significantly enhance the center's ability to serve disproportionately impacted students and improve educational outcomes.
Institutionalizing a full-time (1.0 FTE) Coordinator position is essential to removing these systemic access barriers, ensuring equitable service delivery, and driving retention, persistence, and goal completion for disproportionately impacted SMVF students.

		Disproportionately Impacted Students
1.0 FTE Dedicated VROC Coordinator	*Unfunded*	Restricted appointment capacity, reduced proactive case management for high-risk veterans, and constrained expansion of equity-focused programming.
4 Dedicated Study Laptops	*Unfunded*	Created technology access barriers for low-income and housing-insecure veterans who rely on VROC facilities to complete coursework and access VA portals.

SAOs and SLOs (Suggested word limit 250)

17. State your Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) and/or Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for this program review cycle.
SAO 1 - VROC Connections: 70% of SMVF students will report that they are familiar with at least 5 key Cañada College support services

SAO 2 - VROC SEP Updates: 90% of eligible SMVF students know they must inform the Veteran Counselor of any changes to their certified Student Education Plan (SEP) if class schedule changes.

18. Describe how your program assessed your SAOs and/or SLOs. Share your SAO/SLO data findings

SAO 1 - VROC Connections: 70% of SMVF students will report that they are familiar with at least 5 key Cañada College support services

Assessment Method:
Students were asked the following question: (n - 41)

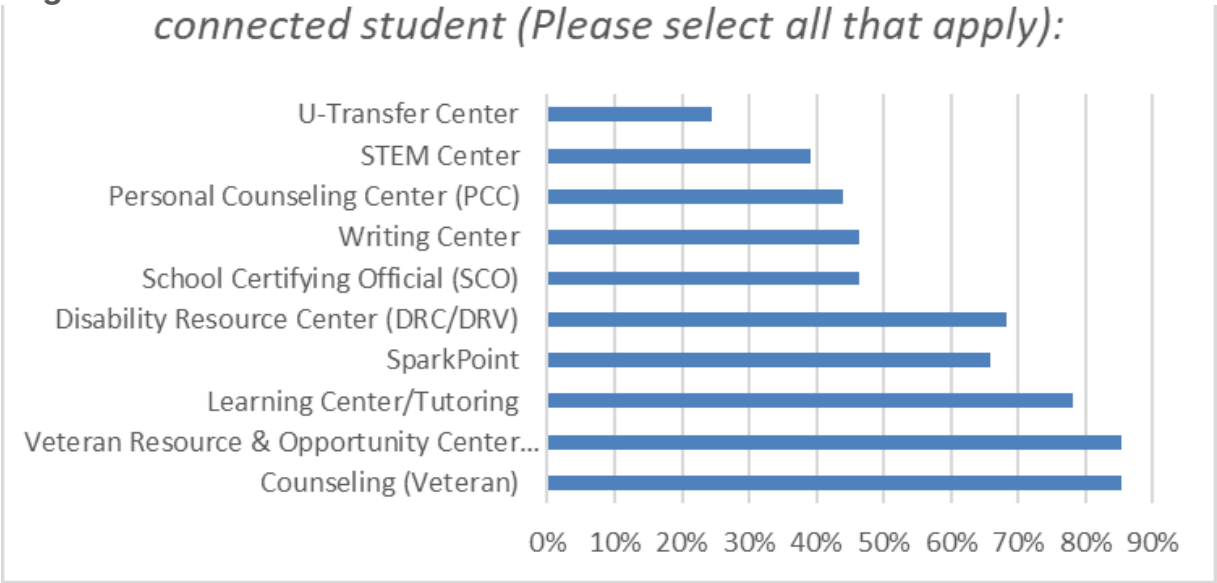
- *I am familiar with the following Cañada College resources that support me as a military connected student (Please select all that apply):*

  - Colts-U Transfer
  - Counseling (Veteran)
  - Disability Resource Center (DRC)
  - Learning Center, (includes Tutoring Services)
  - Personal Counseling Center(PCC)
  - School Certifying Official (SCO)
  - SparkPoint
  - STEM Center
  - Veteran Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC)
  - Writing Center

The results were then tabulated.

Criterion for Success:
70% of SMVFs will be able to identify at least 5 of the services listed above.

Results and Discussion:
Outcome: Criterion not met
63.4% (26 of 41) of SMVF students were familiar with at least 5 programs / services. (See Chart 14)
Further discussion: Survey respondents (N=41) demonstrated strong familiarity with Veteran Counseling (85%), VROC (85%), and the Learning Center (78%). However, awareness was lower for the SCO (46%), Writing Center (46%), Personal Counseling Center (44%), STEM Center (39%), and Transfer Center (24%). It is worth noting that since veterans active service men and women and dependents were surveyed, dependents may not be as familiar with Veterans resources.
Chart 14



SAO 2 - VROC SEP Updates: 90% of eligible SMVF students know they must inform the Veteran Counselor of any changes to their certified Student Education Plan (SEP) if class schedule changes.

Assessment Method:

Students were asked the following question using a 4-point likert scale.
"I must inform my Veteran Counselor to update my certified Student Education Plan (SEP) if my class schedule changes."
Response options were:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The results were then tabulated.

Criterion for Success:

90% of SMVFs will indicate that they either strongly agree or agree with the statement.

Results and Discussion:

Outcome: Criterion not met
82.9% of respondents either agreed (44%) or strongly agreed (39%) with the statement. 12% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed and 2% did not respond.
See chart 15.

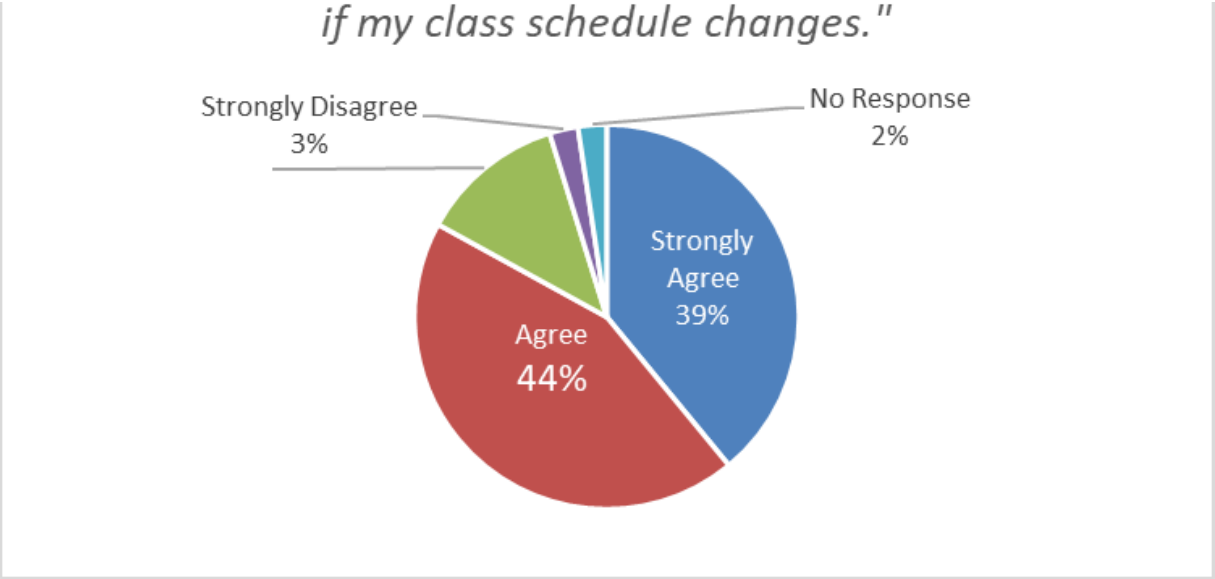
Conclusion:

- While the results indicate that a significant majority of students understand their responsibility to notify the Veteran Counselor when making schedule changes, the program **did not fully meet the established benchmark of 90%**.

- The findings suggest that additional outreach and education are needed to ensure all veterans understand how schedule changes can impact VA educational benefit certification and payments.

To improve future outcomes, the VROC will continue reinforcing this information through new student orientations, counseling appointments, SEP reviews, certification emails, workshops, and targeted communications throughout the semester. These efforts will help reduce certification errors, prevent benefit disruptions, and increase student awareness of VA compliance requirements. (See chart 15)

Chart 15



Looking Ahead: Goals and Program Improvement Initiatives (Suggested word limit 400)

19. State your program goals for the next 3 years. What strategies would you use to address challenges that hinder the expansion or continuation of the equity gaps (from question 12)?

Community Engagement & Cultural Awareness

- Educate Campus Community: Deliver "Green Zone" or military cultural competency training during Flex Day to at least 10 faculty and staff per semester to increase institutional awareness of veteran student needs.Host at least 4 monthly culturally reflective presentations per semester

Have districtwide VA work study student training

- Ensure all three campuses are in compliance with the Department of Veterans Affairs and SMCCD work study policies and procedures with student assistant training. Have training done in person at a specific campus so SMVF students can familiarize themselves with each VROC.

Health, Wellness & Peer Support

- Mental Health Integration: Partner with the Personal Counseling Center and local VA health facilities to offer on-site readjustment counseling, stress management, and PTSD support groups.

20. With an equity and antiracism lens, what are some improvements that have been, or can be, implemented as a result of SAO/SLO Assessment? Please include meaningful action plans to improve student access and success.

Using an equity and antiracism lens, VROC recognizes that student veterans often hold multiple intersecting identities, including first generation, low income, disabled, racially minoritized and parenting students. Improving access to information and support helps reduce barriers that disproportionately affect these populations.

SAO1: 70% of student veterans will be able to identify key support resources at Cañada College.

Some student veterans and dependents are unaware of services available through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Personal Counseling (PCC), SparkPoint, Learning Center and Colts-U Transfer Center. To address this gap, VROC will:

- Integrate resource awareness into a new student veteran orientation
- Develop a "Veteran Success Resource Guide" distributed through Canvas and email
- Have info sessions with food highlighting disability accommodations, mental health support, financial coaching and transfer services; staff from respective program will be invited to attend
- Increase referrals for students with service connected disabilities to the DRC
- (SAO2) 90% of eligible SMVF students know they must inform the Veteran Counselor of any changes to their certified Student Education Plan (SEP) if class schedule changes

Changes in enrollment can negatively impact benefits and create financial hardship. To reduce these barriers, VROC will:

- Send targeted email reminders before add/drop deadlines
- Create a certification and enrollment checklist for all VA-certified students
- Provide proactive outreach regarding Course Program of Student (CPOS) requirements
- Offer social media videos explaining how schedule changes affect VA educational benefits
- These improvements are intended to reduce financial stress, improve benefit
- utilization, strengthen persistence, and increase equitable access to campus

(SAO2) 90% of eligible SMVF students know they must inform the Veteran Counselor of any changes to their certified Student Education Plan (SEP) if class schedule changes.

Assessment results for **SAO 2** showed that **83%** of respondents understood they must notify their Veteran Counselor when making changes to their certified Student Education Plan (SEP), falling short of the established benchmark of **90%**. These findings suggest that some student veterans may not be receiving or fully understanding critical information related to VA educational benefits and certification processes.

Using an equity and antiracism lens, the VROC recognizes that students from disproportionately impacted populations, including first-generation students, students with disabilities, low-income students, and historically underserved racial and ethnic groups, may face additional barriers to accessing, understanding, and navigating complex college and VA processes. To address these barriers, the VROC will implement more intentional and inclusive communication strategies to ensure all students receive timely and accessible information.

Action plans include:

- Expanding SEP and certification education during new student orientations, counseling appointments, and workshops.
- Developing targeted email, text, and social media reminders throughout the semester regarding schedule changes and their impact on VA benefits.
- Creating clear, student-friendly materials that explain certification requirements using accessible language.
- Increasing one-on-one outreach to students identified as at risk of certification issues or benefit disruptions.
- Collaborating with Counseling, the Disability Resource Center, and other student support programs to provide coordinated referrals and support.
- Monitoring future survey results to identify equity gaps and adjust outreach strategies for student populations with lower levels of awareness.

These actions will help reduce barriers to accessing benefits, improve communication, and ensure that all military-connected students have equitable opportunities to maintain their educational benefits, persist in their studies, and achieve their academic goals. By using assessment data to guide continuous improvement, the VROC supports the college's commitment to equity, antiracism, and student success.

21. How did your program's SAO/SLO assessment address equity and antiracism?

Grounded in a Transformational Antiracist Leadership (TAL) framework, the Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) structures its Service Area Outcome (SAO) assessment to evaluate institutional accessibility, eliminate systemic friction points, and close persistence gaps for military-connected students, particularly those holding multiple disproportionately impacted (DI) identities.

Key Assessment Findings & Intersectional Equity Impacts

The assessment measured critical resource familiarity and benefit compliance awareness across our Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) population:

- **Targeted Resource Access Gaps (SAO 1):** While baseline familiarity with veteran-specific support is exceptionally high—**85% for Veteran Counseling and VROC**—the data revealed stark drop-offs for holistic campus services essential for transfer and wellness. Only **24% of SMVF students reported familiarity with the Colts-U Transfer Center**, **39% with the STEM Center**, and **44% with the Personal Counseling Center (PCC)**. Because low-income, first-generation, and minoritized student veterans rely heavily on these wrap-around resources to achieve academic parity, these gaps highlight where outreach must be restructured.
- **Familiarity with SEP Updates: (SAO 2): 83% of certified students understood the correct procedure for updating their schedules.** This fell short of the 90% target. Not following this

process can trigger Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefit delays creating financial stress that can disproportionately impacts student veterans.

Equity-Centered Strategic Actions

VROC is executing targeted equity interventions:

1. **Dismantling Institutional Silos:** Transitioning from passive resource promotion to proactive, embedded support by integrating warm handoffs from Transfer, STEM, and Counseling representatives directly into New Student Veteran Orientations and VROC events.
2. **Plain-Language & Accessible Compliance Workflows:** Redesigning VA certification guidelines into clear, accessible checklists and multi-channel digital communications.
3. **Data Disaggregation & Proactive Outreach:** Disaggregating future assessment cycles by race, ethnicity, disability, gender, and socio-economic status to track emerging trends and deploy high-touch, individualized case management for high-risk cohorts.

By leveraging assessment data to continuously refine service delivery, VROC dismantles systemic barriers, ensures equitable access to educational benefits, and fosters an inclusive academic environment where all military-connected students experience genuine belonging and success.

22. How will you address the opportunities for improvement that you identified throughout the prior sections of this Program Review?

To address identified gaps in resource familiarity and compliance awareness, the Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC) will execute an integrated action plan focused on proactive student outreach, cross-campus programmatic partnerships, and streamlined compliance communications. While baseline survey data showed exceptional engagement with core VROC services and Veteran Counseling, awareness lagged for critical wrap-around resources, including the Colts-U Transfer Center, STEM Center, Personal Counseling Center (PCC), Writing Center, and School Certifying Official (SCO) processes. Furthermore, assessment results for SAO 2 demonstrated that student understanding of Student Educational Plan (SEP) schedule change requirements fell below the 90% benchmark target.

Key Improvement Strategies

1. Strategic Communication & Multi-Channel Outreach

- **Targeted Campaign Deployment:** Implement communication strategies—incorporating direct email notifications, digital Canvas announcements, social media micro-learning content, and classroom visits—to deliver timely updates regarding VA benefit rules, registration deadlines, and campus services.
- **Increased Familiarity with Academic requirements:** Promote greater awareness around academic requirements through multi-point touchpoints, including workshops, pre-registration Canvas alerts, and check ins during individual counseling appointments to prevent benefit disruptions and delays.

2. Cross-Campus Collaboration & Integrated Programming

- **Cross-Departmental Synergy:** Formalize warm handoff protocols and joint programming with the Colts-U Transfer Center, STEM Center, PCC, Writing Center, and Disability Resource Center (DRC) to integrate specialized academic and wellness services directly into the VROC space.
- **Embedded Resource Orientations:** Incorporate structured presentations from campus partners into New Student Veteran Orientations and recurring VROC student workshops to broaden student awareness of wrap-around academic and transfer pathways.

Through these structural improvements, VROC will eliminate administrative friction, enhance student engagement, ensure equitable access to support services, and drive measurable increases in retention, persistence, and degree/transfer goal completion for all military-connected students.

TAL informed SAOs and SLOs for the Next Review Cycle (Suggested word limit 100)

23. With the TAL Framework in mind, state your SAOs and/or SLOs for the next review cycle. Click here for Transformational Antiracist Leadership (TAL) refresher.
SAO 1: VA Education Benefits Knowledge
90% of eligible SMVF students will demonstrate knowledge of VA certification requirements, including the responsibility to notify their Veteran Counselor of any schedule changes that impact their certified Student Education Plan (SEP).
SAO 2: Sense of Belonging and Inclusion
85% of SMVF students will report feeling welcomed, respected, and connected to the Cañada College community through participation in Cañada College services, programs, events, and campus partnerships.

Non-Personnel Item (2026 - 2027)

Requested Year
2026 - 2027

Program Requesting Resources
VROC

Item Requested
Salary Adjustment for VROC Coordinator position

Item Description
VROC is requesting on-going funding to cover the 50% VROC Coordinator's salary and benefits. While the salary and benefits are increasing due to rising step and COLA increases, the CCCCO has informed community colleges statewide that their Veterans Resources funding will be decreased by 10% year-over-year for this year and the next two years. Therefore, VROC would like to request an increase in ongoing year over year funding to cover the 50% VROC Coordinator salary and benefits mirroring how the UCC Coordinator position is funded.

Program Goals this Request Supports
Cultivate an inclusive campus environment that values and reflects the diverse identities of military-connected students.

Status
New Request - Active

Type of Resource
Non-Instructional Expenses (over $5,000) e.g., equipment

Cost
45,000

One-Time or Recurring Cost?
Recurring Cost

Critical Question: How does this resource request support closing the equity gaps as identified in the current SEAP plan?
Having a full-time coordinator throughout the week helps close the equity gap for our SMVFs. Just as student veteran ages vary, so do the needs. Older Vietnam Veteran students may need help navigating the Canvas shell platform for online classes. Student veterans who have a disability rating (a confirmed degree of mental health or physical disability) may need help troubleshooting issues they may have with the VA. Juan, being a veteran who is familiar with the veterans process, closes the equity gap experienced by new student veterans around their benefits, student services and resources while allowing for a space to increase their sense of community on campus.

Critical Question: How does this resource request support LatinX, AANHPI, and Black and African American students?
The VROC intentionally promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging through monthly educational presentations highlighting the contributions, experiences, and challenges of service members and veterans of color. These programs increase awareness of often underrepresented military histories, foster meaningful dialogue among students, faculty, and staff, and create opportunities for military-connected students from diverse backgrounds to see their experiences reflected and valued. By recognizing the service and sacrifice of veterans from different racial and ethnic communities, the VROC helps cultivate a more inclusive campus environment while strengthening students' sense of belonging.

Resource Requests

Among the 140 students served during 2025-2026:

- 35% identified as Hispanic/Latino
- 28% identified as White Non-Hispanic
- 7% identified as Black/African American
- Remaining students identified across multiple racial and ethnic categories, including Asian, Filipino, Pacific Islander, Multiracial and other backgrounds.

Map Request to College Goals and Strategic Initiatives

Which of Cañada College's Goals does this resource request support?
Student Access and/or Success and/or Completion
Equity-Minded and Antiracist College Culture
Community Connections

Which of Cañada College's Strategic Initiatives does this resource request support?
Make registration easier
Connect students to the academic program(s) and classes they need
Ensure students (particularly part-time students) experience a sense of belonging and connection to the College that helps them persist and complete
Improve the financial stability of students
Create and sustain an inclusive and/or antiracist and/or equity-minded campus culture
Better share what Cañada offers
Be the best college choice for local high school students
Strengthen K-16 pathways and transfer
Help students explore and find employment in fields of their choice
Provide adequate access to technology
Manage resources effectively

Personnel – Classified Staff

Hiring Division/Department: ESSP

Position Title:
50% VROC Program Services Coordinator (Adjusting for step and COLA increases)

Is this position permanent?
Yes

Position Type:
Full Time

If Part-Time, what percentage of Full-Time is this position?:
N/A

Provide # of months:
12

Program Goals this Request Supports:
Supporting Veterans and Military Connected community on campus

Position: General Funds
$5,000 but increasing year over year with Step and COLA increases

Allocation: General Funds
$5,000 but increasing year over year with Step and COLA increases

External Funds Expiration Date
N/A

Justification

1. **Describe the specific needs for the position requested and the duties of this position in a brief statement.**

This request is to adjust for the increases in the Veteran Coordinator position. While the salary and benefits are increasing due to rising step and COLA increases, the funding from the CCCCO has remained static. Therefore, this request is to increase ongoing funding year over year following how the UCC Coordinator position is funded.

Note the remaining 50% of the Coordinator's salary is covered by Counseling (Probation Dismissal)
The VROC Program Services Coordinator (PSC) for the Veterans Opportunity and Resource Center (VROC) provides Service Members, Veterans, and Military Families (SMVF) at Cañada College with the support needed for them to succeed at Cañada College. The PSC assists in the planning, coordination, and implementation of services, such as student recruitment, orientation, job skills assessments and job placement, special events, tours, individual and specialized programs and other support for current and potential program participants.

The PSC also works with other educational institutions, community and business representatives, veterans' organizations, governmental agencies and the general public in order to exchange program information and services that directly impact students' academic success, along with mental health and well-being. PSC duties include:

a) Serving as the primary college liaison for veteran students
b) Assisting with the admissions and certification process
c) Supporting SMVFs with understanding and gaining their GI Bill benefits
d) Referring and connecting veterans to college, community and government resources
e) Connecting veterans to campus support programs (Career Center, Colts U Transfer Station, Financial Aid Office, SparkPoint, etc...)

f) Tracking and reporting on veterans' academic success, retention and persistence

2. Explain how this position aligns with and supports the mission and strategic goals of the college.

VROC's mission statement is to provide a welcoming environment for veterans to complete their academic and personal goals. VROC's vision is to provide veterans, of all eras, with personalized service and encouragement by building connections to admissions & records, counseling services, financial aid, academic support services, fellow veterans and veteran related agencies and organizations.

VROC's mission statement aligns with the college's mission statement in that VROC supports a learning centered environment that ensures that all veterans and their dependents have equitable opportunities to achieve their transfer, career education and lifelong learning educational goals

3. Explain how adding this position will strengthen the department or division.

Augmenting funding for this position provides funding to cover the 50% cost of salaries, benefits, step increases and COLA for the Veterans Coordinator position that are not currently covered by Fund 1 nor CCCCO funding.

This position provides Veterans at Cañada College with the following supports:

- Provides VROC with staffing who has experience in addressing the array of mental, social and emotional challenges facing returning veterans
- Increases the number of veterans certified, units that veterans are enrolled in and overall veteran enrollment at Cañada College
- Connects veterans to academic support programs and services designed to increase their retention, success and persistence
- Connects veterans to necessary campus, Veterans Administration and community resources designed to ease the transition from the military back into civilian life
- Streamlines the admissions and certification process for veterans pursuing higher education

4. Explain how this work will be accomplished if the position is not filled.

We need to secure funding to cover 12 months of this 50% position.

VROC will not have the necessary staffing bandwidth to properly address the range of academic, mental, social and emotional needs facing veterans at Cañada. Projects like hosting year-round Veterans events, weekly get-togethers, a book voucher program, launching a student club and providing professional development around supporting veterans will be delayed or may not be launched due to limited staffing levels. Our sister colleges have 1.0 FTE coordinators allowing them to provide year-round availability and visibility. Finally, veterans rely on consistency so by not staffing VROC full-time, we are dis-servicing our veterans and losing the momentum that we have generated with our new expanded VROC

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- Connect veterans to academic support programs and services designed to increase their retention, success and persistence
- Connect veterans to necessary campus, Veterans Administration and community resources designed to ease the transition from the military back into civilian life
- Streamline the admissions and certification process for veterans pursuing higher education

5. Critical Question: How does this resource request support closing the equity gaps as identified in the current SEAP plan?

Having a full-time coordinator throughout the week helps close the equity gap for our SMVFs. Just as student veteran ages vary, so do the needs. Older Vietnam Veteran students may need help navigating the Canvas shell platform for online classes. Student veterans who have a disability rating (a confirmed degree of mental health or physical disability) may need help troubleshooting issues they may have with the VA. Juan, being a veteran who is familiar with the veterans process, closes the equity gap experienced by new

student veterans around their benefits, student services and resources while allowing for a space to increase their sense of community on campus.

6. **Critical Question: How does this resource request support LatinX, AANHPI, and Black and African American students?**

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Map Request to College Goals and Strategic Initiatives ("check all that apply" questions)

Which of Cañada College's Goals does this resource request support (check all that apply)?

- Student Access, Success, and Completion
- Equity-Minded and Antiracist College Culture
- Community Connections
- Accessible Infrastructure and Innovation

Which of Cañada College's Strategic Initiatives does this resource request support (check all that apply)?

- Make registration easier
- Connect students to the academic program(s) and classes they need
- Ensure students (particularly part-time students) experience a sense of belonging and connection to the College that helps them persist and complete
- Improve the financial stability of students
- Support innovative teaching that creates more equitable and antiracist learning environments
- Create and sustain an inclusive, antiracist, and equity-minded campus culture
- Strengthen the college culture of continuous assessment and improvement in order to ensure all programs effectively serve students and close equity gaps
- Better share what Cañada offers
- Be the best college choice for local high school students
- Strengthen K-16 pathways and transfer
- Help students explore and find employment in fields of their choice
- Help meet the basic needs of Cañada students and other community members
- Ensure the physical campus is accessible
- Provide adequate access to technology
- Manage resources effectively

This position has been reviewed by the department or division and is recommended for hiring.

Dean/Director/Hiring Supervisor Name:

Date: