

## PAVE PROGRAM SUPPORTS AUBURN UNIVERSITY STUDENT VETERANS

This entry was posted in [Campus Announcement](#), [Students](#) and tagged [PAVE](#), [veterans](#) on [September 17, 2013](#) by [Wire Eagle](#).  
Written by Jourdan Cooper

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY** - Auburn University is one of five schools chosen to participate in the Peer Advisors for Veteran Education program, or PAVE, a peer support program that will help ease the transition from military life to college life. Incoming student veterans will be paired with a current, experienced student veteran who can help guide them through this potentially stressful time.

PAVE originated through the collaboration of efforts by the Student Veterans of America and the University of Michigan Depression Center and Department of Psychiatry. PAVE officials then decided to reach out to other interested universities.

The program began on Auburn's campus Aug. 21 after David DiRamio, faculty advisor for Auburn University Student Veterans Association, attended a nationwide student veteran conference and met with the PAVE representatives.

Through funding from the University of Michigan Depression Center, Student Veterans of America and the Auburn University Resource Center, Auburn has trained the peer advisors to share their firsthand experience with incoming student veterans and to help them connect with the campus and community. Any student veteran who has attended Auburn for one year is encouraged to volunteer as a peer advisor.

According to the University of Michigan Depression Center, "Universities are seeing a large influx of veterans due to the implementation of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. However, most recent data suggest that only 50 percent of these veterans are successful in achieving their educational goals.

The average veteran faces at least four to five years between high school and college, compared to the average freshman's two to three months. Their deployment experiences and older age may also make it more difficult for them to connect with other incoming freshmen."

Many veterans remember their difficult transition from combat to classes and are eager to support their fellow veterans.

"I know from experience that the journey we begin as veterans is often filled with anticipation, coupled with anxiety and many unknowns," said Robyn Westbrook, Auburn University Veteran Administration certifying official. "I am proud to be in a position in which I can assist other veterans in their quests for starting new lives outside the military."

For more information about the PAVE program or becoming a peer advisor, go to [http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad\\_studies/veterans/PAVE.html](http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/veterans/PAVE.html).

Contact:

Robyn Westbrook, Veterans Resource Center, (334) 844-8167 ([veterans@auburn.edu](mailto:veterans@auburn.edu)),  
Mike Clardy, Office of Communications and Marketing, (334) 844-9999 ([clardch@auburn.edu](mailto:clardch@auburn.edu))

<http://wireeagle.auburn.edu/news/5471>