Profile of
Elaina Koltz
Financial Aid Advisor, Veteran Services
University of Wisconsin–Green Bay
2019 Regents Academic Staff Excellence Award Individual Recipient

Highlights from nomination materials:

• Financial Aid Advisor for Veterans Services since 2009; has worked at UW-Green Bay since 1999, and in 2002, became the School Certifying Official (SCO), the liaison between UW-Green Bay students and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

• As part of UW-Green Bay’s Veterans Program, helps to assist more than 500 veterans and their dependents who use VA benefits; since 2002, the number of students served on campus has increased 300 percent.

• Prepares reports certifying the university’s student benefits to the VA; with the growth in student veterans, additional tracking and reporting requirements became necessary, with audits conducted every few years.

• Serves as a key leader in statewide efforts to fairly and efficiently administer a complex mix of state and federal veterans’ benefits.

• Has created a welcoming environment for students, who express gratitude for her knowledge and genuine concern for their success and wellbeing.

• Leads and helped form the campus-wide Veterans Support Team, which in 2017 brought together a variety of departments to assist students unable to attend the first few weeks of the semester because of Hurricane Harvey.

• Implemented a Veteran and Service Member Student Lounge where these students can find resources and build relationships to support each other throughout the semester; site of monthly Veteran Open House.

• Serves as an advisor for the UW-Green Bay Vets 4 Vets Student Veterans Club and assists with programs in which they are involved, such as the City Stadium Run for Veterans and the Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court.

• Plans activities for annual Veteran Week held around Veterans Day each year; helped develop a Veteran Employment Workshop to bring a veteran advisor from the Department of Workforce Development, along with UW-Green Bay’s career services representative and recruiters from local businesses.

• Became president of a new community program called Northeast Wisconsin (NEW) Battalion Bravo Company, an organization that works on training volunteer veteran sponsors to reach out to veterans/service members discharged from active duty to help them connect to community veteran resources.

• Helping to bring to UW-Green Bay the VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the campus is poised to have the second VSOC program in Wisconsin.

In Elaina Koltz’s own words:

• “When I retired from the Wisconsin National Guard in 2004, I found the military was an institution difficult to leave. After working with student veterans on the civilian side, I realized how blessed I am to still be able to assist our local heroes.”

In the words of colleagues:

• “Elaina leads [the Veterans Support Team] with an infinite amount of energy and dedication. To say that Elaina goes above and beyond as an advocate for our students – especially those connected in some fashion to the military – would be an understatement.”

  —Gregory Davis, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW-Green Bay

• “Elaina has touched so many lives in helping veteran students and their families, and her positive attitude has influenced professionals across the state and region.”

  —Sue Steeno, Assistant Director, Financial Aid, Student Employment and Veterans Services, UW-Green Bay