



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

## Long Island Veterans to Benefit from Veteran-Friendly Campuses

BRIAN X. FOLEY August 14, 2009

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College/university administrators from throughout L.I. meet with Sen. Foley, Assemb. Schimel, Assemb. McDonough, & Div. of Vets' Affairs to discuss ways of helping vets access benefits of new G.I Bill & retain quality higher-education

As more and more veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars come home to Long Island, there is an ever-growing need to provide educational opportunities to veterans. The New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs joined State Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point), Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel (D – Great Neck), Assemblyman David McDonough (R – Merrick) in meeting with administrators from colleges and universities from throughout

Long Island and discussing ways to help returning veterans access opportunities in higher education.

The Div. of Veterans' Affairs briefed the participants on the various tools available to assist veterans. The goals of the conference include increasing the retention rate of students who are veterans, creating higher rates of students and colleges taking advantage of available benefits, assisting in implementing the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill – which offers benefits that are far more generous than the previous G.I. Bill – and developing “Veteran Transition Centers” to educate and support veterans adjusting to lives as students and professionals.

“The men and women who place themselves in harm’s way to protect our way of life are true heroes and have earned every benefit we could possibly offer them,” said Senator Brian X. Foley, who serves on the Senate Higher-Education Committee. “Making college campuses veteran-friendly will encourage veterans to go back to school – and stay in school. I am proud to join my colleges Assemb. Schimel, Assemb. McDonough, and NYS Division of Veterans' Affairs Director Jim McDonough in this worthy endeavor. Together, we will stand up for our veterans and show them the kind of commitment they’ve shown our country.”

"I am a member of the Assembly's Committee on Veterans' Affairs, which is one of my most important committees. The focus of this conference is to help colleges make their campuses more Veteran-friendly, particularly on Long Island where it can impact so many veterans. The turnout was outstanding; it reflects the outreach that the campuses on Long Island want to achieve when serving returning armed forces," said Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel.

“As a member of the Assembly Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and as the Chairman of the Legislative Armed Forces Caucus, I am excited about the benefits now available to our veterans. The creation of ‘Veterans Transition Centers’ on college campuses is an important first-step in providing the support our veterans need and deserve,” said Assemblyman David McDonough.

Participants at the conference thanked Col. James McDonough (Ret.) for his commitment to ensuring that every single veterans who wants to attend college has the ability to do so. "It could not be more timely to gather our friends in higher education to talk about what it means to be Veteran-Friendly," said Col. McDonough (no relation to Assemb. McDonough). "With the debut of a new and expansive set of education benefits, I thank Assemblywoman Schimmel, Assemblyman McDonough, and Senator Foley for sponsoring this great event."

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