



# **WOMEN VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM 2024**



**UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL**

# About the Women Veterans Leadership Program

After 15+ years creating and running programs to empower veterans' continued service, The Mission Continues knows the unique value women veterans bring to community leadership. Through our research, we've seen a recurring theme: women are challenged in ways their male counterparts rarely experience in the pursuit of leadership roles. Inequity persists across pay, advancement and representation for women in leadership roles in nearly every sector of the economy. Women typically have less support in the veteran space and struggle to transition at disproportionately higher rates than their male counterparts. To make progress in closing those gaps it is critical for women veterans to be equipped with resources and networks, to advocate for their own growth and for each other.

The Women Veterans Leadership Program (WVLP) provides leadership skills and knowledge for women veterans to build a movement so we can pursue opportunities for all women in leadership attainment.

Women veterans, like non-veteran women, face systemic challenges with effective communication, loss of identity, confidence and self-care, all of which make the journey to leadership roles more difficult. Additionally, women veterans struggle to find belonging and connectedness in the civilian world, further isolating them from the networks and support that are critical to success as leaders. The result is women veterans lacking the skills, tools and opportunities needed to make it to and succeed in leadership positions when compared to their male peers.

Our communities need the unique leadership traits that women veterans bring to a challenge. Through the in-person experience, virtual workshops and self-paced curriculum, program members will hone their leadership through training and coursework that strengthens: self-confidence, ability to build a coalition of allies, understanding of and ability to leverage storytelling to impact change, and more.

WVLP program members will have opportunities to engage a nationwide network of women leaders and The Mission Continues staff throughout the three months of the program and beyond. After completion of the program, WVLP graduates will gain access to a growing alumni network and be eligible for additional mentorship and leadership opportunities to help grow a veteran-led movement of service.

<sup>1</sup> Institute for Veteran and Military Families at Syracuse University





## Program Goals

### WE HAVE THREE PRIMARY GOALS FOR GRADUATES OF THE WOMEN VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM:

1. To provide program members with the knowledge, mindsets, skills and resources essential to proudly identify as a woman veteran and leader.
2. To strengthen the confidence and passion to raise their voice and serve as an ally for other women in leadership attainment.
3. To prepare them with the knowledge, skills and experience to make a difference in their community.





# What You Will Get

The Mission Continues empowers veterans who are adjusting to life at home to find purpose through community impact. We accomplish our mission by ensuring all of our programming focuses on providing veterans opportunities for 1) personal growth, 2) connectedness and 3) making an impact in their community.

These three components make up The Empowered Veteran Index (EVI), a framework The Mission Continues developed by examining internal and external research of programs that serve similar veteran and community populations. The EVI provides a blueprint for which all programmatic goals and events executed by The Mission Continues are developed, with the goal of improving individual empowerment amongst veterans. By participating in WVLP, you can expect to accomplish the following objectives:

## 1. PERSONAL GROWTH

- Discover the power of your unique identities and how they can be leveraged as assets to your leadership
- Define your values and identify how these inform your authentic leadership pathway
- Foster your inclusive leadership skills by listening and learning from individuals with diverse identities, experiences and backgrounds
- Improve your self-efficacy and ability to remain resilient in the face of adversity
- Learn effective communication techniques
- Explore and inform your leadership strengths using DISC, a behavior assessment tool

## 2. CONNECTEDNESS

- Develop practical skills for networking both in-person and virtually
- Analyze your existing network and develop a plan for enhancing your support systems
- Build relationships with other women veteran leaders in your cohort
- Build relationships with other members of the larger The Mission Continues Community

## 3. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Explore the power of the woman veteran voice and the unique ability of women veterans to lead
- Engage in community service opportunities with your local service platoon
- Engage in two large-scale community service projects with your cohort
- Demonstrate an understanding of your ability and responsibility to affect positive change
- Identify a cause you feel passionately about
- Develop a plan for calling others to join you in taking action



## Storytelling & Calling Others to Action

At The Mission Continues, we believe in the power and potential of women veteran leaders to create change around important issues facing our communities. As part of this program, each woman veteran will complete a capstone project, in which they will call the other women in the cohort to action around a pressing issue.

Throughout this program, our women veterans will explore the transformational experiences from their individual journeys that have influenced their values, leadership, and passion to create change

around a particular cause or issue. Putting words into action, program members will “pitch their cause” as a capstone project during the program culmination. In doing so, these women will not only raise awareness for a cause they care about, but will also build a collective network of supportive women veteran leaders. Each WVLP member will have the opportunity to commit to action and join their sisters-in-arms in creating change around the important issues raised that desperately need collective leadership to influence change.







## Learning Approach

Various learning modalities grounded in best practices in adult learning theory are utilized to deliver the WVLP curriculum to program members.

- Full Cohort Sessions:** Throughout the three months, the entire Cohort will come together twice for 3-day conference style sessions at the beginning and end of the program. These full-cohort sessions will be held in-person in a different city each time. During these in-person sessions, program members will connect and learn alongside each other by engaging in interactive workshops led by subject matter experts, hear from diverse women leaders through panel discussions as well as individual featured speakers, and complete one community service project in each city. All costs associated with travel, lodging and most meals for the in-person sessions will be covered by The Mission Continues.
- Live Virtual Sessions:** The curriculum of WVLP is carefully designed to ensure program members are growing in each of the program's five focus areas and engaging in coursework leading up to and coming out of the live sessions. The Mission Continues' Leadership Development programs utilize LearnUpon, an online learning management system where program members will engage in self-paced learning, group assignments, and connect with other program members and the WVLP team. Program members will receive a program syllabus at the start of the cohort that includes a brief overview of each course including both enrollment and assignment due dates. To continue engaging and building connection between our in-person sessions, women will also attend virtual workshops led by experts in the field. More information on attendance requirements is provided in the "Expectations and Commitments" section on page 7..
- Learning Management System (LMS):** The curriculum of WVLP is carefully designed to ensure program members are growing in each of the program's five focus areas and engaging in coursework between the in-person sessions. The Mission Continues' Leadership Development programs utilize LearnUpon, an online learning management system where program members will engage in self-paced learning, and connect with the other program members, TMC Staff, and Alumni Ambassadors. Program members will receive a program syllabus at the start of the cohort that includes a brief overview of each course including both enrollment and assignment due dates.

# Expectations and Commitments

## **SESSION ATTENDANCE:**

Before the program officially kicks off in-person at Session I, all WVLP members are required to attend one of two virtual program orientation options. Additionally, full attendance at both of our 3-day sessions is mandatory for program completion. During these full-cohort sessions, program members attend dynamic workshops and presentations, as well as build meaningful connections to other women in the program. For our upcoming Cohort, the session dates and locations are below.

Please note: attendance at these sessions will require taking time off of work. We ask that all program members are fully engaged and present at these sessions, so please ensure that you are able to make arrangements to attend before committing to the program.

**Orientation (virtual):** February 13, 2024 or February 15, 2024

**Session I (in-person):** March 15-17, 2023 (Travel on March 14th) | St. Charles, IL

**Session II (in-person):** May 17-19, 2023 (Travel on May 16th) | Washington, D.C.

## **ADDITIONAL LIVE TRAININGS:**

Throughout the program, WVLP members will also be invited to join additional live workshops and training sessions in between the larger, mandatory sessions. These interactive workshops support continued learning and are strongly encouraged for all program members to attend. Sessions are led by subject matter experts and offer opportunities to continue building connections to other women in the cohort.

## **COURSEWORK COMPLETION:**

Throughout the program, you will regularly be enrolled in new courses through the Learning Management System (LMS). During orientation, you will receive a program syllabus that provides an overview of each course you will be enrolled in over the three-month program. Some of these will be completely independent, self-paced learning, and other courses will require you to work with a group. The syllabus will include enrollment and due dates for each course, and our expectation is that program members are regularly submitting their coursework on time.

## **TIME COMMITMENT:**

WVLP is an intensive leadership development opportunity, and we estimate that program members will spend an average of 3-5 hours/week completing program work throughout the entire three months. The time commitment fluctuates and may sometimes be above or below this estimate.

## **FINAL PROJECT:**

To tie all of the program learning together, WVLP members will complete a final project where they “pitch their cause” to garner support and influence change in an area they are passionate about. At the program culmination session, all program members will present their pitch in small groups of fellow cohort members, The Mission Continues staff and additional program supporters.

## **ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY:**

In order to complete this program, WVLP members will need access to an email account, reliable internet connection, and a computer and/or tablet with a video camera for video meetings, virtual learning, and email communication.

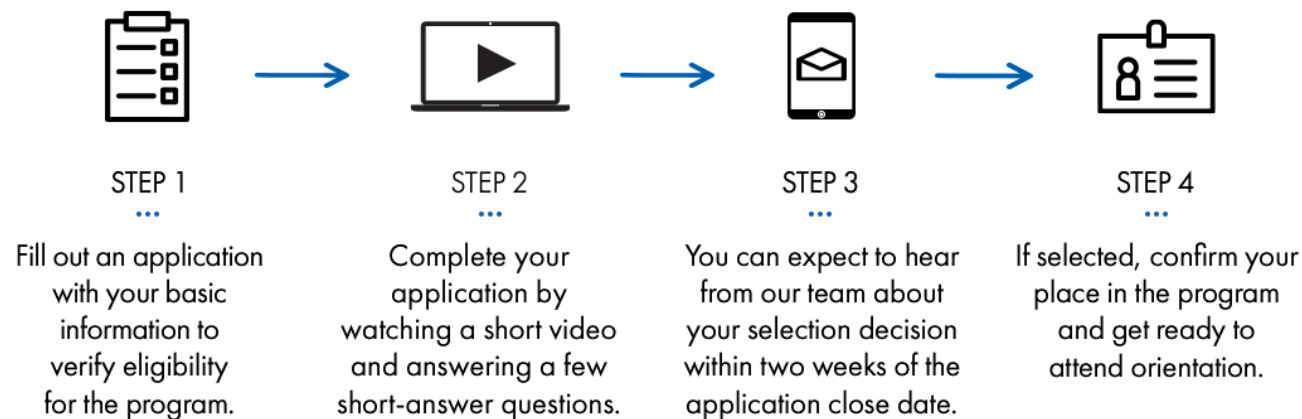


# Admissions Process

## ELIGIBILITY:

- Self-identify as a woman
- U.S. military veteran from all branches or currently serving in the National Guard or Reserves
- U.S. resident who currently resides in one of the 40+ metro areas The Mission Continues serves. Please click [here](#) to view a full list of cities on our website.
- Completed one year of military service with a Character of Service above a "Dishonorable Discharge." Applicants with a Dishonorable Discharge status can still apply and will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis
- Current or upcoming platoon leaders will be considered on a case-by-case basis due to the competing time commitments required for both
- Women Veterans Leadership Summit and/or Service Leadership Corps alumnae are eligible to apply. However, this is an introductory program that assumes no previous leadership training with us. Therefore, it will be most beneficial to women who have not previously attended the Women Veterans Leadership Summit and/or Service Leadership Corps

## APPLICATIONS OPEN JANUARY 3, 2024



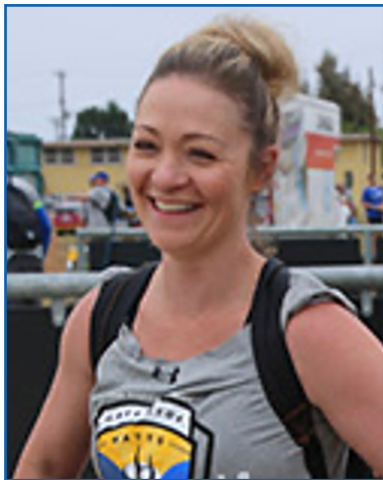


## Meet the Team

During their time in WVLP, program members will have a team of Mission Continues staff here to support them in successfully completing and getting the most out of this program. In addition to Mission Continues staff, Program Ambassadors (WVLP Alumni) will be available to answer questions and provide additional support for the overall program experience.



**JANET NEWSOME**, US Navy Veteran  
Senior Manager, Women Veterans Leadership Program  
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**HEATHER MCCARTY**  
Vice President, Programs  
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## Program Cost & Sponsor Support

Thank you to The Mission Continues' generous sponsors whose support ensures that the Women Veterans Leadership Program is offered completely free of charge to program members. This includes travel, hotel accommodations and most meals for the two in-person sessions.

### PRESENTING SPONSORS:



### BRONZE SPONSORS:

**BAE SYSTEMS**

THE *Coca-Cola* FOUNDATION



## What Program Graduates Are Saying



"Thank you for this tremendous experience with all of these fabulous women. I have cried, laughed and learned from each of them. Some of my experiences I thought I was the only one, now I know there are plenty of us out there. Strength in numbers. We need to tell our authentic stories so others understand us (and other veterans) better. This program has given us the tools we need to tell our stories."

**- Deirdre D., US Army Veteran**



"I can't say enough how GRATEFUL and beyond BLESSED that I was selected to be a part of this program. I am appreciative of each and everyone who has made it possible for myself and all the women veterans from across the world come together! I NEEDED this RIGHT NOW in my life! I have sat back long enough on the sides and it's time to go FULL FLEDGE in my role as a TRUE and AUTHENTIC LEADER for the WORLD to hear and know my story as they will be inspired to write their own. Thank you to ALL of the women in the cohort who have accepted me as I am and ALL OF MY ENERGY!!!"

**- Jamicka E., US Army Veteran**



"I had no idea there were so many resources available to veterans, and I appreciate the referrals. I'm learning practical leadership knowledge and skills, and am getting opportunities to practice applying what I am learning. The curriculum is well thought out and expertly presented. The networking and support are as valuable as the learning experiences."

**- Skyler M., US Marine Corps Veteran**