

AN ACT

RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; CREATING THE MILITARY WAR
VETERAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. A new section of Chapter 21, Article 21E
NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"MILITARY WAR VETERAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND--PURPOSE--
ADMINISTRATION--DISBURSEMENTS.--

A. There is created in the state treasury the
"military war veteran scholarship fund". The fund shall
consist of money appropriated to the fund, any grants, gifts
and bequests made to the fund and income from investment of
the fund. Any money in the fund from grants, gifts, bequests
or investment income shall not revert to the general fund at
the end of any fiscal year. Money in the fund shall be
disbursed on warrants signed by the secretary of finance and
administration pursuant to vouchers signed by the secretary of
higher education.

B. The higher education department shall
administer the fund and shall make disbursements from the fund
to reimburse post-secondary educational institutions under the
exclusive control of the state for tuition payments, required
student fees and book allowances for military war veteran
students, including students who have received a baccalaureate

degree and are enrolled in a program of study leading to a master's or doctoral degree, who are attending post-secondary educational institutions pursuant to Article 9, Section 14 of the constitution of New Mexico and who are in compliance with the educational institution's satisfactory academic progress requirements. A financial aid officer may exercise professional judgment when special circumstances exist to adjust the cost of attendance or expected family contribution or to modify other factors to make the program responsive to a student's special financial circumstances; provided that documentation exists in the student's file within the parameters authorized for this program.

C. A military war veteran may apply to the veterans' services department for a scholarship. The veterans' services department shall determine the eligibility of an applicant and certify approved applicants to the higher education department. The higher education department shall pay by voucher to the appropriate post-secondary educational institution an amount not exceeding the amount of the scholarship for an approved military war veteran. Money in the fund shall be allocated in the order that applications are received and approved.

D. The higher education department and the veterans' services department may adopt rules and procedures as necessary or appropriate to implement the provisions of

this section.

E. As used in this section, "military war veteran" means a person who has been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States; who was a resident of New Mexico at the original time of entry into the armed forces or who has lived in New Mexico for ten years or more; and who has been awarded a southwest Asia service medal, global war on terror service medal, Iraq campaign medal, Afghanistan campaign medal or any other medal issued for service in the armed forces of the United States in support of any United States military campaign or armed conflict as defined by congress or presidential executive order or any other campaign medal issued for service after August 1, 1990 in the armed forces of the United States during periods of armed conflict as defined by congress or by executive order."

SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the provision of this act is July 1, 2013. _____