Veterans’ Transition Program:
Experiential Learning for Veterans in Assistive Technology and Engineering (ELeVATE)

Mary Goldberg, MEd
Department of Rehabilitation Science & Technology
Human Engineering Research Laboratories
Quality of Life Technology Center
Veterans returning from current conflict

- 40% of OIF/OEF veterans have been diagnosed with PTSD
- Of the over two million Service Members who have been deployed in either Afghanistan or Iraq, 52% are between the ages of 20-29
Clashing cultures

• Many aspects of veterans’ complex transition experiences are not well understood by faculty, staff, and administrators

• Manufacturers also need sensitivity training related to veterans with disabilities

• Vets with disabilities need assistance with transition
Preparation

- Needs assessments
- Connection with veterans’ service organizations
- Linkage with local campus vets’ services organizations
- Recruitment
Why Pittsburgh?

- Top notch universities
- Exciting research
- Affordable living
- Lots to do!
- Rehab epicenter
Why Rehab Science and Technology?

- Translatable & fundamental skills
- Develop creative & practical solutions
- Work with variety of clinicians, engineers, researchers
ELeVATE Overview

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzmuq4KHzog&list=PL5F0810B030480E64&index=10&feature=plpp_video
ELeVATE

• Objective
  – To provide supplemental assistance to veterans transitioning back into higher education

• Strategy
  – REU
  – Transition assistance
  – Supplemental assistance
Program model

## Recruitment
- Formal Education
- Study Groups
- Networking

## Support Structure
- Standardized Test Prep
- Application Assistance
- Counseling
- Benefits Assistance

## Return to Work or Active Duty
- Mentors
- Research

## Rehabilitation
Am I the right fit?

• Are you a veteran?

• Are you interested in or currently studying engineering, computer, or health or rehabilitation sciences?

• Are you looking for a spring or summer internship?

...if yes to all, we pay a stipend and support living costs during the full time internship!
Program Timeline

- Interested in spring position? Contact Mary mrh35@pitt.edu ASAP
- Summer application due 2/15
- Summer program 5/27-8/2
Supplemental assistance

- Link to rehab care in area
- Create mentor relationships with vets in area
- Partnership with a rehabilitation counselor
- Link to soldiers’ & vets’ organizations in area (i.e. Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania)
Previous cohorts

- **ELeVATE**
  - 10 students (3 Marine, 1 Navy, 6 Army)
  - 4 enrolled 4 year university & preparing for graduate school
  - 1 enrolled in community college & preparing to transfer to 4 year
  - 5 applying for higher education
  - Mix of academic interests
For more information please contact:
Mary Goldberg
mrh35@pitt.edu
412-822-3700