



2023-24

Impact Report



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Friends & supporters,

The past year has been a record-breaker for Service to School, as we mentored an unprecedented number of veterans, about **one-third more than in previous years**, and crossed several milestones.

In our 12-year history, we've now confirmed over **3,000 matriculations**, with more than **500 to our VetLink Partners**, some of the nation's finest colleges and universities. Our applicants are admitted to these schools at about **twice the rate of traditional students**. This fact is a testament to our veterans' capabilities and our partners' support and veteran advocacy.

Our alumni are doing some incredible things on campus. Several have won prestigious awards, including the **Marshall** and **Truman Scholarships**, which demonstrate our nation's veterans' potential and ability to excel in the most challenging academic institutions.

Service to School couldn't accomplish its mission without its capable staff, network of committed volunteers, and generous donors. Our full-time staff of six worked with over **2,500 veterans** this year, and over **1,000 ambassadors** volunteered their time to mentor our applicants. We received nearly 100 donations, over 60 from our **100 Veterans Campaign** supporters.

Finally, generous support from **The Duchossois Family and Manton Foundations** has been a game-changer, enabling us to execute our programs, including the annual VetLink Summit. Your commitment and generosity are the driving force behind our success. Working with this incredible team is truly a privilege as we ensure our nation upholds its promise to those who served.

Alec Emmert

Service to School, Chief Executive Officer



Our Mission

To prepare transitioning service members and Veterans for their next chapter of leadership by helping them gain admission to the best college or graduate school possible.

Over the last 12 years, we have grown into a leading organization that has **supported thousands of veterans and transitioning service members** who are interested in furthering their education. We've learned the critical role our ambassadors, admissions colleagues, and staff of admissions experts play in the advising experience for veterans.

Veteran academic empowerment requires collaboration with national colleges and universities to create pathways that allow these non-traditional students to share their unique experiences and show how these will enable them **to thrive in the classroom, on campus, and beyond.**

Applicant Spotlight

I used to have a strained relationship with school. Growing up, my self-worth was tied to my academic accomplishments. I got good grades and even graduated high school as the class valedictorian, which brought me pride but also left me feeling lost and unsure of my path beyond others' expectations.

I wanted to find who I was outside the classroom, so I joined the Navy as a Cyber Warfare Technician. My decision to enlist faced criticism from friends and family who saw it as a mistake. However, I saw joining as an opportunity to discover myself. My service allowed me to overcome new challenges and uncover my potential as a whole person. From intensive training in networking concepts to leading peers, the Navy demanded adaptability and continuous learning, and I grew in response to what came my way.

Most importantly, I found my voice. I struggled with my mental health and hit a low in 2022. Unfortunately, when I sought help, I was met with hostility and ambiguity from the base appointment line. Fueled by this experience, I crowdsourced testimonies from my peers and brought the issue of mental healthcare barriers to my command, resulting in clarified resources and additional providers. Though positive change was made, I felt the fight wasn't over. I learned that getting better was an ongoing, lengthy process for many. This inspired me to change direction toward a career in clinical research.

I knew I needed to go back to school, so I sought guidance from Service to School (S2S). S2S's virtual fairs provided invaluable insights into what top universities sought in applicants and helped me decide where to apply. Additionally, I received personalized guidance in crafting my application from my ambassador, Jesse. As another Cyber Warfare Technician, he understood my experiences completely and was crucial in translating them into my college applications. I wholeheartedly believe I wouldn't have been accepted into Yale University without him!

At Yale, I plan to major in Neuroscience and hope to join one of the research labs at the medical school. Beyond academics, I am excited to connect with my heritage through the Filipino club, Kasama, and explore new interests like stand-up comedy and music production through various campus clubs. Attending Yale is not just the next step in my career; it's an opportunity to discover more in life and make meaningful change.

Karenina Pelias,
US Navy veteran, Yale University Class of 2028



To "Admission Accomplished" and beyond! We are always striving to transform education for veterans & help prepare them for the next stage of leadership.



The Veteran Challenge

▶ About **66%** of veterans are first - generation college students who lack foundational knowledge about college selection, application, and admission

Because of this, about **33%** enroll in low-graduation, for-profit colleges

School selection is a leading contributor to the fact that **46%** of veterans who start college do not finish



41%

of S2S Undergraduate applicants are persons of color



83%

of S2S applicants applied as a transfer student



2024 ADMISSIONS SUPPORT SNAPSHOT

3633 Veterans used
our resources

680 Total Veteran
matriculations

311 Undergraduate
Matriculations

278 MBA
Matriculations

54 Law School
Matriculations

33 Graduate School
Matriculations

4 Healthcare
Matriculations

Our Difference

We have pioneered a unique, near-peer advisory model in which volunteers, known as Ambassadors, with recent college admissions experience mentor veteran applicants.

This **free service** provides veterans with the foundational knowledge they need to select schools that will set them up for success and write applications that will get them admitted. **Similar personalized services can cost upwards of \$5,000**, a financial outlay few veterans can afford.

Therefore, Service to School is doing its part to democratize higher education for veterans. Our results speak for themselves.

90%

Service to School applicants see
a 90% college acceptance rate

> 90%

of applicants recommend S2S's
near-peer advisory program

Our Reach

Veterans use S2S all around the world



2,500 S2S Podcast Listens

478 Virtual Admissions Fair Participants

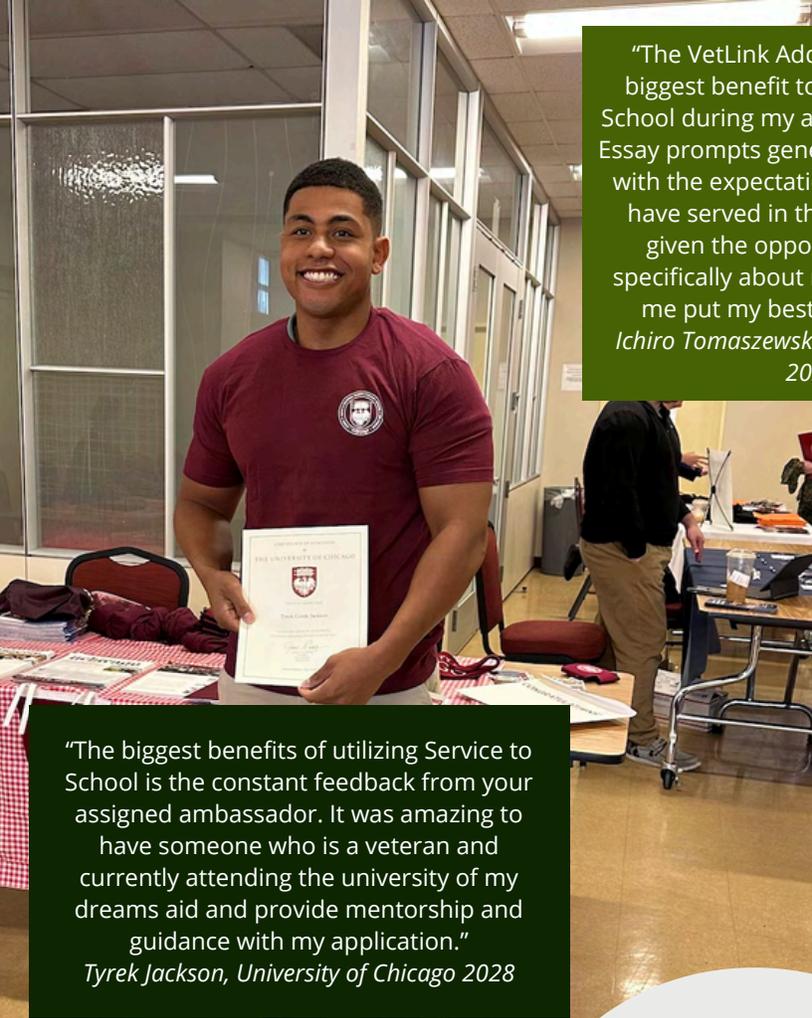
8,800+ Guidebook Downloads

6,700+ S2S YouTube video views

22,500+ Follow us on social media

714,000+ Reach on social media & website

168,000+ Campaign engagements



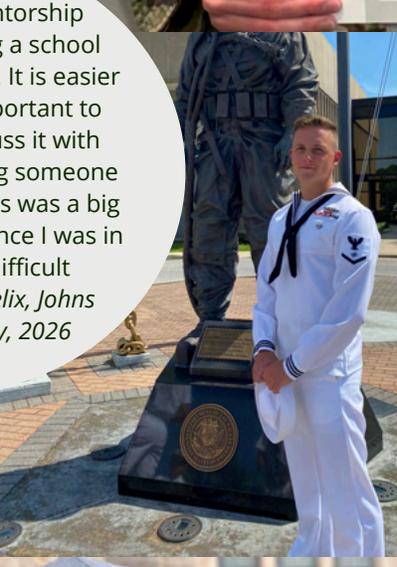
"The VetLink Addendum was the biggest benefit to using Service to School during my application process. Essay prompts generally aren't written with the expectation that applicants have served in the military. Being given the opportunity to write specifically about my service helped me put my best foot forward."
Ichiro Tomaszewski, Brown University 2028



"The biggest benefits of utilizing Service to School is the constant feedback from your assigned ambassador. It was amazing to have someone who is a veteran and currently attending the university of my dreams aid and provide mentorship and guidance with my application."
Tyrek Jackson, University of Chicago 2028



"Peer-to-peer mentorship assisted in selecting a school that was right for me. It is easier to know what is important to you when you discuss it with someone else. Having someone to help edit the essays was a big help too, especially since I was in the middle of a difficult semester."
Dylan Felix, Johns Hopkins University, 2026



What Our Applicants are Saying



VetLink Partnership

Service to School has formed its VetLink Partnership with a network of colleges that are committed to veteran success

Our partner colleges are widely known for academic excellence, leading-edge research, and high graduation rates

By partnering with these institutions, Service to School is working to break the cycle of low veteran graduation rates and open the doors to a fulfilling career.

2023-24 Highlights



787 S2S veteran applications to VetLink partner schools

689 VetLink Addendums submitted

232 VetLink college acceptance letters

122 VetLink matriculations

TOP VETLINK APPLICANT DESTINATIONS

Princeton University
Harvard University
Yale University
Brown University
Cornell University

6x

increase in veteran applicants to our partner schools

3.4x

VetLink applicants are getting accepted at a higher rate than traditional applicants

94%

of VetLink graduates employed or in grad school 3 months after graduation



VetLink Summit

S2S hosted its 2nd annual VetLink Summit at the University of Chicago in June 2024. The event brought together over 150 members of the VetLink community including administrators, current students, prospective applicants, and community partners. In doing so, it highlighted the impact S2S and VetLink have had in shaping veterans' lives by opening the doors of some of the nation's finest colleges and universities. Veterans shared their experiences and showed the audience the value veterans bring to campus.



"As a VetLink partner, Vassar College is able to share our diverse and engaged community with prospective students across the globe. Service to School provides opportunities for us to highlight what makes Vassar special; dedicated support for all U.S. military servicemembers and veteran students, its small class size, open curriculum, research opportunities, unlimited Yellow Ribbon benefits and meeting 100% of demonstrated need. The VetLink Addendum provides us with valuable information about a service member's achievements and helps translate their military experience in layman's terms. The essay portion allows us to understand an applicant on a deeper level, which in turn improves our holistic review of their application for admission." - Colleen Mallet, Director of Veterans Students Outreach & Support at Vassar College

Inaugural S2S Scholars Cohort

This year, Service to School pioneered an admissions cohort to provide support to a group of **22** high-performing veterans



100%

Applied as transfer student

100%

First generation college student

50%

Identify as person of color

90%

admitted to a top 3 school on their list



HARVARD



UC San Diego

VASSAR

100%

of survey participants mentioned the S2S Scholars cohort was beneficial

"It has been amazing and so helpful to have this lifeline to assist with a process that seems determined to drive one mad."

"I only wish more veterans can join this cohort in the future!"

"I truly appreciate the tailored responses to everyone's questions. I learned about a few Veteran Resources I had not heard of before. Thank you so much for the cohort, and I look forward to staying in touch!"

"I gained more and more knowledge every meeting. Its not just the S2S staff but I learn from the other student veterans as well."

ETS Veterans on Campus

We know student veterans bring an incredible perspective and strength to college campuses. Our student veterans are campus leaders, engaged in policy work supporting veteran mental health and suicide prevention, and conducting research at some of the nations premier research institutions.

PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIPS

GIVING BACK TO COMMUNITY



Desaree Edwards
US Navy
Wesleyan University
2024 Truman Scholar



Bob Atkinson
US Air Force
Yale University
2024 Marshall Scholar

CONGRATS TO OUR 2024 TILLMAN SCHOLARS



Matthew Balint
UC Berkeley Haas



Karyna Bravo
Stanford Medical School



Hillary Browning
Yale Law School



Genevieve Chase
Yale University



Zac Cobb
Yale Law School



Maressa Guynn
Carnegie Mellon Tepper



Galen Jones
Yale School of Management



Matt Morris
Duke Business



Clara Navarro
Columbia Medical School



Rico Pesce
Icahn Mt Sinai



Randip Singh
Stanford Business School



Tobin Stauffer
Stanford Med



Kayla Walsh
Harvard Business School



James White
Duke Medical School



William Wolff
UVA Law

Meet the *Team*



ALEC EMMERT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER



SYDNEY MATTHES
CHIEF PROGRAMS
OFFICER



ALEXANDRA NIEVES
CHIEF OPERATIONS
OFFICER



AMANDA DOBIAS
CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICER



ANNIE BEHARI
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT
SUCCESS



WHITNEY CASON
DIRECTOR OF
VETLINK



FORREST SEAMAN
DIRECTOR,
MBA PROGRAM



JEREMY RODRIGUES
PROGRAM MANAGER,
JD PROGRAM



GEORGE LEMEUR
CO-DIRECTOR,
JD PROGRAM



PETER CAMPBELL
DIRECTOR,
HEALTHCARE PROF PROGRAM



JOHN P. JASIONOWICZ
DIRECTOR,
GRADUATE PROGRAM



CANDICE CREECY
PROGRAM MANAGER,
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT



TOM WESTER
PROGRAM MANAGER,
GRADUATE PROGRAM



ANSON CHENG
CHIEF FINANCIAL
OFFICER

Board of *Directors*



*Hillary Browning
First female enlisted veteran
at Yale Law School, Navy
Veteran*



*David Calfee
Senior Advisor at BSG Growth,
Army Veteran*



*Augusto Giacoman
Partner at Strategy& (a PWC
business), Army Veteran*



*Tim Hsia
Founder of Media Mobilize
and The MilVet, Army Veteran*



*Adrian Perkins
Teaching Fellow at University
of Chicago, Former Mayor of
Shreveport, LA, Army Veteran*



*Christine Schwartz
COO at Combined Arms, Army
Veteran*



*Bob Spieth
Chairman of the Board,
Advisor – Advent
International, Army Veteran*



*Khalil Tawil
Co-Founder & Principal
Quality Standard, Army
Veteran*



*Kaleth Wright
18th Chief Master Sergeant of
the Air Force*

We couldn't have done it without your *generous support!*

\$50,000+

The Manton Foundation

\$25,000-49,999

The Duchossois Family Foundation
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\$5,000-24,999

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\$100-499

Amanda Robbins	Jim Selbe
Andrew Tresansky	Joe Palen
Brandon Shelton	Lisa Abramson
Charlie Wikman	Madison Lamb
Daniel Lagana	Michael Jarboe
David Hwang	Michael Lochhead
David Martinez	Patrick Swain
Glen Evans	Robert Ciolek
Ilya Avdeyenko	Sebastien De Groof
Jakob Webber	

< \$100

Abigail Perdew	Kelsey Bailey
Alec Emmert	Kyle Downey
Alexander Clark	Margaret Powell
Alexander Halachis	Mark McCullick
Aun Moe	Patricia Amato
Azeem Currah	Robert Woodings
Carlos Hernandez	Sharon DiCristina
CPT Group	Stephen Burns
Dustin Weyand	Travis Wood

...and **many** donors who wished to remain anonymous

Thank you We are so grateful for your continued support of our efforts to support Veterans pursuing higher education.



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Service to School

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