



Triton College

# CONNECT

An e-newsletter from your community college



Join us for our Veterans Day celebration.

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## Triton College Salutes Our Veteran Heroes

We are grateful to all veterans for their selfless service and sacrifice to our nation.

Triton College salutes their patriotism and are honoring our own veterans throughout the month of November.

### Robert Connor

US Army – 20 Years  
Major (O-4)

I wanted to join the Army because my father was a professional Army officer. I traveled a lot growing up since my father was stationed at various Army posts around the country. My oldest brother went to United States Military Academy West Point and my other brother was an Army lawyer. I became a professional infantry officer. When I was retired after 20 years of service, I earned a master's degree in library science. I'm currently a librarian at Triton College.

### Ernest Davis

US Army – 3 Years  
Corporal (E-4)

When I was growing up, there was a draft. Due to the draft, I decided to sign up for the military on my own so I could pick where I wanted to be placed. After high school, I wanted to go into special forces. I was in the Vietnam War. It was very rough coming home because the war was traumatic. At Triton College, I'm an assistant professor. I teach math and science. Teaching math and science was something that I thought I wanted to do years ago, but I never got into it. I love teaching at Triton.

### Robert Tapia

US Marines – 3 Years  
Corporal (E-4)

I registered for the military draft when I turned 18. My mother was worried that I would have to go to Vietnam, so she sent me to Mexico City to avoid the war. After two years living in Mexico City, I decided to return to the United States because my younger brother was almost 18. He would have to enlist and possibly go to Vietnam. If something happened to him, I wouldn't be able to live with myself. So, I came back to the United States and joined the Marines. I ended up fighting in the Vietnam War. I served twice in Vietnam.

It was a traumatic experience. After returning from the war, I was disoriented. To cope, I started reading and studying philosophy. Today, I have a Ph.D. in philosophy. I have been teaching at Triton College for six years. I like working with college students because I enjoy helping them. I try giving disoriented students guidance through philosophy.

### Tracy Jennings

US Army – 3 Years  
Specialist (E-4)

Tracy Jennings of Westchester, Triton College's Board of Trustees secretary, served in the United States Army for three years (E-4).

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Robert Connor  
US Army  
Triton College  
Faculty

Ernest Davis  
US Army  
Triton College  
Adjunct Faculty

Robert Tapia  
US Marines  
Triton College  
Adjunct Faculty

Tracy Jennings  
US Army  
Secretary, Triton College  
Board of Trustees

Antigone Sharris  
US Army Reserve  
Triton College  
Faculty

R. Lance Wilson  
US Army  
Triton College  
Faculty

James Malarski  
US Army and  
US Army Reserve  
Triton College  
Adjunct Faculty

After graduating high school in 1986, Jennings felt a civic duty to join the United States Army.

His permanent duty station was the 101st Airborne Division Fort in Campbell, Ky. He was assigned to the 5th of the 101st Aviation Unit, where he was the petroleum supply specialist. Jennings served three years active duty from 1986-1989.

While on active duty, the secretary of the Army awarded Jennings the Army Achievement Medal. This honor was given to him for his ability to motivate and lead within the 5th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment of the United States Army.

As a public servant, Jennings has worked for the state of Illinois as a public service administrator (PSA) from 2013-2018. He held the title of PSA in three state agencies: The Department of Human Services, The Department of Children and Family Services Legal Division, and The Department of Employment Security. He's also a trustee for the village of Westchester.

As for Triton College, Jennings was elected to the board of trustees in April 2021 and has been secretary since April 2022. He noted that everyone in his family has taken classes at Triton College and feels it is a great place to learn.

In October 2021, Jennings returned to Illinois as a senior public service administrator for the DCFS Legal Division.

Jennings is a graduate of Northern Illinois University and DeVry University.

#### **Antigone Sharris**

**US Army Reserve – 12 Years  
Private First Class (E-3)**

I wanted to serve in the military because my family has served. My father served in World War II and my mom survived World War II. My uncle was in the Greek Navy. When I was in high school, I was in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). I really enjoyed it. So, I decided to join the Army Reserve. I was 71L, admin specialist, during a time when computers were becoming more important. I was setting them up

during my weekends with my unit, skills which relate to what I do now. I've been teaching at Triton College for 24 years in engineering technology, welding, CAD and everything in between.

**R. Lance Wilson**  
**US Army – 3 Years  
Corporal (E-4)**

When I got out of the military, I wanted to be a police officer. I worked my way up the ladder at a police department until I became a sergeant. After a few years, I decided to leave policing and go to medical school. I became a cardiologist. I'm currently a retired cardiologist and teach classes at Triton College. I've been teaching at Triton for 21 years.



**James Malarski**  
**US Army and US Army Reserve – 27 years (Vietnam/Desert Shield/Desert Storm) – Command Sgt. Major (E-9)**

When I joined the military, it was right in the middle of the Vietnam War. I wasn't drafted – I felt a duty to join. During my time serving, we were fighting in the jungle every day. When I came back from the war, I joined my brother's business as a partner. Due to my military background, I was asked by the government to teach at an alternative high school. I taught high school on the west side of Chicago for 10 years. I've been teaching at Triton College for 20 years in the Adult Education Program.

**David Anderson**  
**US Army – 22 Years  
Lieutenant Colonel (O-5)**

I wanted to join the military because my college ROTC Program would pay for my undergraduate degree. I found this appealing because I could avoid student debt and I would have a guaranteed job in Europe waiting for me after I finished.

My unit was ranked No. 2 in maintenance operation excellence in the USA and No. 1 overall in the division. I was the chief military history instructor at the United States Army Armor School at Ft. Knox. I helped with the Gulf War I and the refugees afterwards. I was awarded the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

This experience helped me grow up immensely. I saw the world, received paid training (Airborne, Ranger, digital technology and computing) and learned a lot of good work experience. I learned a lot about team accomplishment and achievement, as well as being thankful for being born in the United States. I learned about the value and power of education and "opportunity cost" – the value of time applied to accomplishing goals instead of being idle.

At Triton College, I am a full-time tenured professor in the CIS Department. I've been at Triton since 2001.

Veterans Day is an opportunity to publicly recognize the contributions of living veterans and to show

appreciation towards them. It's not about free meals, discounts, tributes and platitude. This is a time to truly show veterans our appreciation to those who have been willing to put themselves at risk for our freedoms.

**Flavio Cipriani**  
**US Army – 2 Years  
Sergeant/Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (E-5)**

I was drafted in 1970 during the Vietnam War. I was deployed to South Korea for a year where a cold war was going on. The United States troops were in South Korea at the DMZ (demilitarized zone) to try to stop the North Korean Army from entering South Korea. I was in the First/Seventy-third Armor Division.

After a few months, I was reassigned to be a chaplain's assistant and I provided transportation for the chaplain. We went to several surrounding villages to improve the relationship between the United States soldiers and the Korean people. I worked at the St. Barbara Orphanage to improve their living situation. I helped at the (non-contagious) leprosy colony.

I believe that the military helped me become a better person and gain respect for all people. For me, Veterans Day means freedom for American people.

After my service in the United States Army, the government helped me finish college by paying my tuition. I graduated from the University of Illinois with a B.S. in secondary education.

At Triton College, I currently teach Italian I, Italian II and Conversational Italian for the Continuing Education curriculum.

**Kimberly Drummond**  
**US Navy – 2 Years  
Airman (E-3)**

When I graduated high school, I was in a bad place. I really wanted to go to college, so I thought joining the military would be a good option for me. I served for two years. It gave me the ability to go to college. I decided to come to Triton because they had a daycare facility for my son and a great nursing program. I love the people here and the people I work with.

## The Chi Zeta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) is Collecting Comfort Items



### PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY

The Chi Zeta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) at Triton College is collecting the following comfort items for homeless veterans from now through Friday, Nov. 18, 2022.

Items will be accepted – Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., in the Office of Student Life, Room B-240, on the Triton College campus. The items collected will be donated to the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital in Hines, Ill. Individual or travel sizes of toiletry items are preferred.

“Anyone who spends their life in service and makes sacrifices for this country deserves dignity and respect. Our goal is to provide that respect and appreciation,” said Ismael Medina, Chi Zeta Chapter president.

PTK is collecting:

- Alcohol-free aftershave.
- Alcohol-free mouthwash.
- Chapstick or lip balm.
- Combs.
- Crossword puzzles/games.
- Denture adhesive.
- Denture cleaner (tablets).
- Deodorant.
- Disposable razors.
- Hand and body lotion.
- Nail clippers.
- New undershirts (all sizes).
- New underwear (all sizes).
- Paperback books.
- Playing cards.
- Shampoo and conditioner.
- Shaving cream.
- New sweatpants (all sizes).
- New sweatshirts (all sizes).
- Toothbrushes.
- Toothpaste.
- New winter gloves.
- New winter hats.
- Word-find books.

*Please note - we cannot accept items which are not listed.*

# VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION



Triton College will be hosting a forum to recognize and honor veterans on

**Thursday, Nov. 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

**B Building, Room B-204/210**

Triton College is inviting the Triton College community along with Triton student veterans and those involved in the River Grove American Legion Post #335 to campus to give gratitude for their service.

Triton is asking the veterans to share their stories regarding work they did while they served (driver, auto mechanic, infantry, etc.) and how that service helped shape their career path.

Attendees can also sign postcards that will be given to Post #335 to share with currently serving military personnel, thanking them for their service.

Community members, as well as Triton students, faculty and staff, are invited to meet those who have served our country to honor our own American heroes.

For more information, please visit [triton.edu/hero](https://triton.edu/hero).

For more information, please contact

Mary Casey at (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3811, or [marycasey@triton.edu](mailto:marycasey@triton.edu)  
or Ken Smith at (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3485, or [kensmith@triton.edu](mailto:kensmith@triton.edu).



Triton College's  
**HOLIDAY**  
 FESTIVAL of TREES

**Get in the spirit of the season by viewing Triton College's holiday lights celebration!**

Come drive through our campus and surround yourself in the rows of brightly lit trees. You can even stop by for a selfie or take your own family photo.

**Free** holiday drive-through and photo opportunities begin

**Friday, Dec. 9**

and run through Jan. 2, 2023.

Photo opportunity locations.



The location of Circle Drive is indicated in grey. Circle Drive has a speed limit of 10 mph. Please use caution at all times and watch for pedestrians.

**For more information, please call (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3290.**

Triton College reaffirms its commitment to affirmative action and equal employment for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, age, or any other basis which is protected by law except where such characteristics are bonafide occupational requirements.

Inquiries regarding compliance with state and federal non-discrimination regulations may be directed to:

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There's a place for you.



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** Mark R. Stephens, Chairman; Diane Viverito, Vice Chairwoman; Tracy Jennings, Secretary; Norma Hernandez; Glover Johnson; Elizabeth Potter; Richard B. Regan; Naidelin Alvarez, Student Trustee  
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Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org), a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.