

May 2025

Communications and Marketing Plan



Colorado National Guard

Tuition Waiver

May 2025

“Serve Your State. Strengthen Your Future.”

Table of Contents

Project Description	3
Project Objectives.....	4
Project Roles	5
Marketing Tactics.....	5
Target Audiences.....	6
Channels & Tactics.....	6
Process Flows	7
Metrics & Evaluation.....	7
Timeline (12-Month Cycle).....	8



Colorado State Tuition Waiver (CSTW) for Army & Air National Guard

Communications & Marketing Plan

Project Description

The Communications & Marketing Plan for the Colorado State Tuition Waiver (CSTW) is a strategic initiative developed by the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to promote awareness, understanding, and participation in the tuition waiver program among eligible Army and Air National Guard members. The CSTW program offers qualified Guard members the opportunity to attend Colorado public colleges and universities tuition-free, supporting their personal and professional development through accessible higher education.

This plan outlines targeted communications strategies, outreach efforts, and promotional tactics designed to ensure all eligible service members, stakeholders, and partners are informed, engaged, and supported throughout the program's lifecycle. By leveraging digital media, in-person outreach, partnerships, and print materials, the campaign aims to enhance program visibility and streamline the application and usage process for both service members and institutions.

This plan supports all eligible Air and Army Colorado National Guard members annually in navigating and utilizing the Colorado State Tuition Waiver benefit.

Project Objectives

1. **Raise Awareness:**

Ensure all eligible Colorado Army and Air National Guard members are informed about the CSTW program and its benefits by the end of the fiscal year.

2. **Improve Program Understanding:**

Clearly communicate CSTW eligibility criteria, benefits, application deadlines, and the enrollment process to reduce confusion and increase participation.

3. **Strengthen Institutional Collaboration:**

Establish or improve working relationships with Colorado higher education institutions to align expectations, clarify administrative processes, and streamline verification and payment procedures.

4. **Enhance Outreach Materials and Channels:**

Develop and distribute updated, branded marketing materials including flyers, brochures, digital ads, website content, and a video tutorial to support education and recruitment efforts.

5. **Establish Ongoing Communication Rhythm:**

Launch biweekly information releases through digital and in-person channels to maintain program visibility and keep members engaged throughout the year.

6. **Evaluate and Adapt:**

Implement quantitative and qualitative performance metrics to track outreach, engagement, application rates, and satisfaction, using this data to refine and improve future outreach efforts.

Project Roles

Project Role	Name	Email	Phone Number
Project Webmaster	Breanna Bang	Breanna.bang@dmva.state.co.us	720-250-1537
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Project Support for Marketing	Dave Schmidt	david.a.schmidt.nfg@army.mil	720-250-1133

Marketing Tactics

- Update DMVA website with comprehensive Tuition Waiver materials and content
- Finalize and publish Tuition Waiver Communications & Marketing Plan
- Finalize and distribute Tuition Waiver Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
- Design and disseminate a branded marketing flyer
- Create a recruitment-focused trifold brochure
- Display promotional content on all Colorado National Guard (CONG) monitors
- Develop and distribute an updated FAQ sheet
- Post a PowerPoint presentation with an embedded video tutorial on the DMVA website
- Produce and share a YouTube video featuring program highlights and testimonials
- Conduct Tuition Waiver training sessions for CONG leadership and during weekend drills
- Coordinate Public Affairs dissemination of marketing materials to all CONG members

Target Audiences

Primary

- Current Colorado Army & Air National Guard members
- Prioritize 1st time degree seekers and newly enlisted Guard members
- Commanders, unit leadership, and education officers
 - Army Chief of Staff, COL Pribil
 - Buckley SFB, COL Worrell
 - G1, MAJ Jackson and team
- Colorado higher education institutions

Secondary

- High school and college counselors (for recruiting pipeline)
- Family members (influencers)

Channels & Tactics

Digital & Social Media

- Social Posts: Rotating posts featuring benefits, deadlines, testimonials.
- Targeted Ads: Family Programs
- Email blasts to all current Guard members and leadership.
- YouTube Video: Explainer video with Guard members captioned for accessibility and shared across recruiting and retention channels
- Guard Websites & Portals: Public Affairs Air & Army. Add dedicated CSTW page to DMVA webpage with FAQ, guide, deadlines.

Print Materials

- Flyers & Posters: Distributed to armories, recruitment offices, campuses.
- Brochures: Email to members and in welcome packets.
- Postcards: Quarterly reminders timed before each semester.

In-Person Outreach

- Unit Briefings: Delivered at drill weekends and Yellow Ribbon events.

- Education Fairs & College Events: Booths at Colorado colleges and Guard events.
- Command Outreach: Provide briefing slides and talking points to commanders and senior leadership
- Quarterly COANG and COARNG Newcomers and Student Flight

Partnerships

- Colleges & Universities: Partner with financial aid offices and student advisors.

Process Flows

- DMVA is responsible for establishing standardized communication procedures and forms for use with participating institutions.
- DMVA is responsible for developing standardized invoicing templates and processes for institutions to request annual tuition offset requests.
- DMVA is responsible for implementing a comprehensive tracking system to monitor:
 - Student enrollment at each institution
 - Total credit hours per student
 - Total funding allocated to each institution
 - Total cumulative credit hour usage per student.
 - Academic Standing
- DMVA Accounting is responsible for designing and implementing standardized forms and procedures for processing annual institutional requests and payments.

Metrics & Evaluation

Quantitative:

- # of tuition waiver applications submitted

- Website traffic to CSTW info page
- Social media reach, engagement, and click-throughs
- Attendance at briefings/events

Qualitative:

- Feedback from service members, institutions, and education officers
- Survey responses on program awareness and clarity

Timeline (12-Month Cycle)

Month	Activities
Mid-May	Complete Communications & Marketing Plan
End of May	Complete SOP Evaluation and Lessons Learned
May-Jun	Launch social media blitz, conduct unit briefings. Meet with institutions on processes and create workflows.
June	Promote Fall semester, send reminder emails
June	Distribute print at drills and colleges, run fall campaign ads
Aug-Sept	Highlight success stories, run early Spring push, update website
Sep-Oct	Mid-year performance review, adjust digital strategy
Nov-Dec	Winter reminder campaign, prepare for next year outreach

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