

The Certification Outlook

Connecting you to credentialing resources



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How a retired Soldier leads education growth in the Army National Guard

Dr. Kenneth Hardy emphasizes the importance of credentials in creating well-rounded citizen-Soldiers in the National Guard

As employers seek staff members with verified knowledge and skillsets, the value of certifications and credentials continues to grow. Nowhere is this truer than in the Army National Guard (ARNG), where members benefit from credentials in both civilian and military roles. As the Chief of Education Services for the Army National Guard, Dr. Hardy has had a crucial role in establishing the widespread use and availability of certification and education benefits within the organization.



Dr. Kenneth Hardy, Chief of Education Services for the Army National Guard

What is your military background and what is your current role?

I'm a retired Sergeant Major with a total of 24 years of service. I served three years on active duty, four years in the Massachusetts National Guard as a drilling Soldier, and 17 years on Title 10 Active Guard Reserve for the Army Guard. Currently I'm the Chief of Education Services for the Army National Guard. I'm responsible for the oversight of the Voluntary Education program for all 54 states and territories, with a budget of over \$150,000,000. I spend a lot of time helping states administer their education programs, including developing policy, reviewing and approving documents, and training and equipping the education staff.

Lastly, I oversee about 60 people on our team, including program managers, a contract team, and education counselors in the states and territories. I'm always thinking about what else we can do to provide better service to our staff and to our Soldiers.

What is one thing you've learned running education services that you wish you had known when you started?

How to effectively engage with the Department of Defense (DoD) to ensure reserve component Service members have access to education benefits. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) controls tuition assistance, including the rules, guidelines, and sometimes even the amounts that we're allowed to spend. Generally, education benefits are focused on the active duty Service member. OSD rarely considers the reserve components.

I have to constantly remind them that the reserve is not a small piece of this pie. The ARNG is over 50 percent of the Army's combat force, and roughly 30 percent of Guard-component Soldiers are using education benefits. Wouldn't you want to help the ones that are using those benefits? I've engaged with so many people in the DoD on a regular basis: they're familiar with who I am, and they know that I'm going to be there to advocate for National Guard Soldiers. It's still a constant challenge, but I hope that I've established the National Guard's perspective so that our concerns are addressed.

Certification Spotlight

What is the biggest obstacle that you face in getting Soldiers to use their education and certification benefits?

In the Army National Guard, we have Soldiers located throughout the 54 states and territories, so it's much more difficult to make them aware of all the education benefits available to them. Education is the number one reason that applicants join the Army National Guard, so I am constantly reminding our education staff in the U.S. that they need to be out there explaining how Soldiers can access and use those benefits to obtain their education goals and objectives. Just because someone sees something about education flash across their screen doesn't mean they're going to enroll tomorrow. We must keep our education benefits on the minds of our Soldiers by showing them the advantages of obtaining a degree, certification, or licensure, both now and in their futures.

As an example, one of my Education Services Specialists recently put a class together with a vendor on the Project Management Professional (PMP®) certification. They set up and advertised the class and filled it to capacity in just a few days. Soldiers have an interest in using our education benefits; we just need to be more diligent in getting the information out to them.

Where do you see credentialing in the future?

Employers are now looking for certain credentials. You see people using them in their resumes because credentials tell employers that the candidate has the skills they're looking for. I believe more academic institutions will begin offering training for these programs. For some students, a college degree simply isn't the most useful path, but obtaining

a few credentials might be perfect. Schools should better accommodate the needs of both employers and students, adding training programs that align more closely to certain career fields..

Over the course of your career, have you seen any changes in the way that certifications are viewed in the DoD?

The DoD's intent is that the services help transitioning Service members get credentialed. If you look at the Army's Credentialing Assistance Program, you'll see the direction that the services are going. Unfortunately, military training doesn't always correlate to a civilian occupation and that can lead to employment issues when Service members transition. Today, military leaders are very interested in supporting credentials for numerous reasons — they enhance Soldiers' skills and abilities while serving and they help them with transition. In short, credentials make them better citizens and better Soldiers.

What would be your advice to Soldiers considering credentialing?

Credentials can be a real difference-maker for someone's career. For the Army National Guard, many of our Soldiers are already working in the civilian sector, so we strongly encourage them to take advantage of the Credentialing Assistance Program, which offers Soldiers up to \$4,000 a year to obtain a credential. Not only will a certification or licensure enhance their civilian careers, but it will help make them a better Soldier as well. This is truly one of the few programs that can benefit any Soldier, regardless of their career or education background.

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– Dr. Kenneth Hardy

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Certification program updates

The following certification programs are now available CONUS and OCONUS at Pearson VUE test centers located in your US military base education building.



Chicago Police Officer: The Chicago Police Officer Exam is available at select base-sponsored Pearson VUE test centers, both within and outside the state of Illinois. Candidates must have completed an application for the Chicago Police Officer position and received an Authorization to Test email from Pearson VUE prior to scheduling their exam. Visit [PearsonVUE.com/CPD](https://home.pearsonvue.com/CPD) for more information or to register for an exam.



International Coaching Federation (ICF): International Coaching Federation Credentials and Standards offers credentialing at the Associate, Professional, and Master Certified Coach levels for professional coach practitioners who meet rigorous education and practice requirements. Visit [https://home.pearsonvue.com/Clients/International-Coaching-Federation-\(ICF\).aspx](https://home.pearsonvue.com/Clients/International-Coaching-Federation-(ICF).aspx) for more information or to register for an exam.



Louisiana Real Estate and Appraisers: Louisiana Real Estate and Appraisers licensure exams are available at select base-sponsored Pearson VUE test centers, both within and outside the state of Louisiana. Visit [PearsonVUE.com/LA/Realestate](https://home.pearsonvue.com/LA/Realestate) for more information or to register for an exam.



Pennsylvania State Police: Pennsylvania State Police exams are available at select base-sponsored Pearson VUE test centers, both within and outside the state of Pennsylvania. Interested applicants can apply at www.employment.pa.gov. Only authorized candidates will be invited to complete the exam. Visit [PearsonVUE.com/PSP](https://home.pearsonvue.com/PSP) for more information or to register for an exam.



Tanium Career Certifications: Tanium Career Certifications consist of two certifications for cybersecurity professionals to showcase their proficiency with the Tanium platform. The entry-level Tanium Certified Operator certification measures core foundational knowledge, while the more advanced Tanium Certified Administrator focuses on those with the job roles and expertise to administer Tanium. Visit [PearsonVUE.com/Tanium](https://home.pearsonvue.com/Tanium) for more information or to register for an exam.

For a full list of available certifications, visit [PearsonVUE.com/Military/Exams](https://home.pearsonvue.com/Military/Exams).

63%

*of survey respondents
said certification increased
their job satisfaction.*



Pearson VUE at the CCME Symposium

We were honored to participate at the virtual 2021 Council of College and Military Educators (CCME) Symposium on June 16. Through our four sessions, we shared a variety of information and resources to help Service members, test centers, and military educators in their pursuit of industry certification. Here are some highlights:

- Pearson VUE's Federal Director Christopher Bloor and Hiring our Heroes USA's Mona Dexter spoke about tools and strategies that military spouses and dependents can use to **increase the chances of job search success**.
- Christopher Bloor moderated a panel of certification experts from the Association of Government Accountants, CertNexus, and Microsoft, who highlighted **strategies for optimizing the certification process** and shared how they determine exam requirements and map certifications to industry job roles.
- Pearson VUE's Director of Government Market Development Sue Jackson presented with Workcred's Dr. Roy Swift, and together they detailed the data-driven efforts underway to **increase the accessibility and understanding of civilian certifications**, identify the right programs, and create better outcomes for transitioning Service members and military spouses.
- Sue Jackson was joined by Air Force veterans representing the PMI Pikes Peak Regional, Colorado Chapter, who explained **how PMI chapters provide education, networking, and support to veterans and Service members** and shared how attendees could get involved with their local chapter.

To learn more about our sessions, request copies of the presentation slides, or ask questions of the speakers, please contact Justin.Berndt@Pearson.com.

77%

of survey respondents received government funding for their training courses



2021 Pearson VUE Value of Certification report.

Don't forget

COOL: Service members in all branches can find information on training, credentials, and licenses related to their military and civilian careers. Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) and the Army's Credentialing Assistance program help identify training gaps and define the paths needed to earn civilian and federal positions. Additionally, each COOL website features key information about funding, accreditations, and in-demand credentials. Visit PearsonVUE.com/military/funding to learn more about how COOL works in your branch.

Government Store: Service members and government employees can shop for competitively priced certification vouchers and learning materials for leading certifications at Pearson VUE's Government Store. GovStore.PearsonVUE.com utilizes a multi-modal training and testing solution featuring eLearning, study guides, practice tests, and certification vouchers to help students take the next step in their certification pathway. Visit GovStore.PearsonVUE.com to see our full product suite of learning, testing, and procurement options.

Help your military community succeed:

If you are interested in opening a Pearson VUE test center on your base, contact DoD@Pearson.com.

 www.Linkedin.com/showcase/Pearson-VUE-Military

 www.Facebook.com/Pearson4USMilitary

