Colmery Act Research

Participant 4? (Ed) 2pm

Moderator Introduction

M: Tell me about yourself.

Let’s see. Um. Navy. Emblem warfare. I got pretty messed up. I’m 100% permanent. I ride my motorcycle and have a Prius – which is one of those little known conflicts. Actually the motorcycle gets better MPG! I got a girlfriend and am going to Cuba – going for 1 month – I’ve been there many times in the past few months! Don’t believe anything they say about Cuba. I scuba dive, and I teach beginning, intermediate, and advanced scuba programs. The guy that runs the program was in the navy – he was in the X program and I was in Francisco Bay. We have a lot of sympatico, and we are former combatants and now we’re like brothers.

M: Have you used VA for services?

I’m over there 1-2x / week for psychiatric and orthopedic. A lot of ortho. Once a week on the psych stuff.

M: Ever used for education benefits?

I have been in voc rehab. I finished a degree an NTSU (?) – and started a masters in nonprofit leadership in the fall. I got a panel of people that are trying to decide – I may be taking a year off

M: Was that Belmont in Nashville?

They got a real neat process. We take people from battlefield to classroom with emphasis on ivy league schools. Fundamentally we are underserved minority and ivies have ID’d lack of combat vets rep in the ivies so they are recruiting hard. Warrior scholar project is something I’m going to pitch to all of you – it costs nothing to go. Our people at Harvard in the stem process they were studying under someone who won a Nobel prize last year. It pivots on liberal arts more than you might think. It’s interesting to see snake eaters talking about poetry. We’re not cognizant that people have skill sets in that realm. It’s neat. It’s really neat. We had one girl in the process at Yale and she had 4 purple hearts. If you met her. You would have absolutely no idea. What’s going on in our society with this and how people are being reintroduced into civilian life. You don’t know how you are talking to in terms of how Veterans go.

M: Neat program! Are you familiar with Colmery Act or Forever GI bill?

Is that for post 9/11 only?

M: yes

They need to back that up to gulf 1. I saw some friends get seriously jacked in gulf 1.

M: any input and feedback is great.

WHOA. {reacting to prototype showing up on his screen automagically}

M: What we’re looking at is a prototype. It acts like a real site but won’t submit data. Take a look around this page and info on it and take the same amount of time that you would the first time you’re visiting a site like this. What is purpose of this page?

The last thing that I can read is benefit percentage.

M: you should be able to scroll. It may be laggy.

Yeah its way laggy yea.

Yeah there’s a difference btw distance hours btw voc rehab and GI bill. With GI bill you have to have 1 physical class on the campus and with voc rehab its all online.

M: does that effect how you use the benefit?

Yes absolutely. Various and sundry people get a better shake from different institutions. Had I known I could do voc rehab anywhere, I would have been somewhere else. I didn’t know until later. Let’s see. Ok, am I reading this for content or how its laid out or what’s missing.

M: content – what is it telling you. Feel free to talk me through your understanding of what’s on the page.

I don’t think the VA should share the benefit percentage, the amount of benefits based on duty time. Are they sharing it with the schools or with the VSOs? If they are sharing it with the school itself…the school itself is only entitled to know that they’re going to get paid. The actual notification should only go into the VSO at the school. Which is not part of the school basically. The school certifying officers, and somewhere in this there should be an understanding that your teacher knows this stuff.

M: Based on what you see – who is getting this?   
The school is getting it

M: the entire entity not just vso?

School means teachers, janitors, so broad based, this is my opinion I can’t speak for a lot of – the amount of $ that you’re getting for tuition and fees that’s to be understood that they’re going to get paid. If you’re getting money through yellow ribbon program. The school itself only deals with whether your bill is getting paid. The School Cert Off (SCO) they have kinda got a brick wall between them and the school – I think the 1905 is a cert thing that goes to the bookstore and bursar’s office or school accounting – so the people who should get this kind of information would be the SCO or the VSO at the school. I’m just kinda tossing that out there it’s just a perception. Let’s see. See and the thing is and if you don’t want that info shared with the school – if they can’t share that information they can’t get you certified your stuff doesn’t get paid.

M: How would it work if you don’t share?

You would have to pay for your school and get paid back.

M: Elaborate

It would be my contention that the school would drop you, b/c you’re refusing to give the info to the certifying officer – I want to say it’s the 1905. There’s something that the school get from the school certifying officer. If you don’t give this info – if you don’t allow this info shared, you’re not going to have your tuition paid, your monthly BAH paid. You have to share this info to get post 911. You cannot opt out of this stuff. That’s just a fact. It’s quid pro quo. It’s like if you want to get a beer in a bar, you have to show ID. If I said I’m not showing you my ID, they would say get off our sidewalk., I don’t think you could opt out of the sharing of information based on your willingness – you want benefits, well then you have to allow this to go to the school. You can’t opt out w/o being dismissed with prejudice. You could pay out of pocket and then get loans and hope to get paid back. Or it would take 6-8 months to find out. That you don’t want to share your info so they may make it difficult to pay.

“Does this affect my benefits?” NO… That’s kinda not true. At some point you need to know your eligibility date, -if you don’t allow them to know this information. You can say I’m in this program, but I’m not going to tell you this info, then the school would have to say oh sure go to class. Even if you’re past your benefits or – if you know something that I don’t about this, please tell me.

M: It matters how this info is perceived.

The school shouldn’t get this info – it should get red light or green light if the VSO or VA will be paying this tuition. I want to say its 1905. You get a certification letter that says your GI bill is good to go. That indicates to the school. The school doesn’t know moment to moment what you owe. They give you a line of credit or a letter of credit. They have things that are going to be due that the US Government is standing in behalf for the good of me. They don’t need to know any of that, but opting out could create a raft of problems.

M: Let’s say you want to opt out. What would you do next, even if it doesn’t match your personal preference?

I would hit the button that says opt out.

M: What action would you take to opt out?

I would hit the opt out button. Or actually I would learn more about about the act. I would learn about it. I might put the Colmery Act info above the opting out thing to explain Colmery or let’s see. I’d go way up with that. Let me see if I can get this thing to scroll. Yeah I’d explain uh the hwc-----. Colmery is hard to say. I would put that block above the opt out. I would put opt out at the very bottom. I would explain Colmery right under this. There’s the one sentence under opt out of sharing. I would put it in there rather than have it opt out.

M: tell me more

It’s kind of like you’re hiding the explanation of colmery. It’s a sentence between opt out and colmery. That kind of information would be long before you talk about what info is shared. That would potentially dispel a lot of the – most of us don’t care. You want my info sure. It doesn’t matter. I have to give my SSN at the bank. We are an open book everywhere. I write my social on the thing at the VA – if anyone thinks that’s secure they’re smoking dope. I would have that link to explain it way, way up high that way they know what they’re doing and there’s an explanation – if you opt out of sharing this info with the school if you explain so far as to say – this info is going as far as the service office at the school. This information is \_\_\_ and not privy to it. I would ditch the school part and the veterans. I know more about the mechanics of this more than your average bird. I have an understanding of the matrix better than most. If you just said this just goes to a specific veterans’ office it won’t go any further than that. If you opt out of this, there may be more paperwork involved, you may have to submit in person. This info does have to go through the cert official at the school whether it is shared by you or by these guys. So there’s no way for you to opt out of it once you’re getting post 911. You’re stuck sharing that information where you give it or where it’s pipelined in. that can be very significant, under voc rehab, I only got $765 / mo in BAH. Other groups got $2100. The groups at veteran scholar- they get $4400-4600 for living stipend and tuition is also paid. I don’t know if you knew the spread of how that paid.

M: If you wanted to opt out, you would click on the button at the bottom. Go ahead and click on that and tell me your understanding.

Let me see if I can get back down there. Are you sure you want to opt out? Here are some things that are going to change. There it is! Boom. Just like that. Good.

M: Does this affect your understanding of opting out?

Um. I would explain that prior to hitting the green button. For this reason. If I hit that green button and thought that I was opting out, I would have made an assumption that I was opting out right then. Then here’s some information. I’d feel a little squirrely about it.

It’s like with the colmery thing. It’s kinda – you need to tell them this before they start getting confused. How do I opt out. Here’s hang on. How do I tell VA if I don’t want my info shared. The explanation. See here’s the thing. Why does VA share this information? Blah. Will opting out affect my benefits? Yeah. It will. Because it’s going to delay your benefits and you have to go in. it’s kinda a half truth. You’re going to have to go in.

RESEARCH WAS CUT SHORT B/C GTM ERROR