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Vouchers offer advanced education for senior enlisted Sailors

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The Chief of Naval Personnel announced funding for the FY-14 Advanced Education Voucher (AEV) program April 1, providing advanced education opportunities for top-performing chief, senior chief and master chief petty officers.

Announced by Naval Administrative Message (NAVADMIN) 072/14, AEV provides financial assistance to selected senior enlisted personnel (E7-E9) to complete post-secondary, Navy-relevant degrees through off-duty education.

Master Chief Electronics Technician (EXW/FPJ) Richard Simpson, enlisted education program coordinator at the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC), noted that this educational program is one of the most significant in the sea services, as the Navy invests in the future of enlisted leadership.

“For senior enlisted members interested in or pursuing advanced education, the AEV program is an outstanding resource,” said Simpson. “AEV offers the opportunity to get a degree from a university without having to worry about finances or Tuition Assistance (TA) restrictions, as it pays for 100 percent of tuition, books and fees up to a specified limit.”

The AEV program will fund bachelor’s and master’s degree completion in designated, Navy rating-relevant areas of study. Examples include: strategic

foreign languages, construction management, emergency and disaster management, homeland defense and security, human resources, business administration, leadership and management, engineering, information technology, nursing, paralegal, business administration, education and training management and electrical /electronic technology. All degrees, including any not listed above, must be approved by the AEV program coordinator at NETC to validate Navy relevance.

Chief Machinist's Mate (SS) John Matthews, torpedo quality assurance supervisor for the Naval Submarine Torpedo Facility in Yorktown, Va., recently completed his bachelor's degree in Business Administration with Saint Leo University using the AEV program.

"Both my leadership and Sailors are already receiving a return on the Navy's investment by the way I communicate more effectively both up and down the chain of command," said Matthews. "It can be challenging going to work and school at the same time, but the sacrifices pay-off in the long run. I am grateful for the opportunity to achieve this educational milestone and recommend the program highly."

Eligible applicants include E7s with no more than 17 years of time in service (TIS), E8s with no more than 19 years TIS and E9s with no more than 23 years TIS. Time in service for all pay grades is computed to October 1, 2014. The TIS ceilings are not waivable. Proven superior performers with continued upward mobility are encouraged to apply.

AEV will support bachelor's degree completion in approved, Navy-relevant areas of study through off-duty education, capped at \$6,700 per year for a maximum of 36 months from the date of enrollment and covers 100 percent of tuition, books, and related fees. Total program cost per student is limited to \$20,000. Qualified

candidates must have an associate degree from an accredited institution or the equivalent amount of college credit applicable to the degree being sought.

The AEV master's degree program covers 100 percent of tuition, books, and related fees up to a maximum of \$20,000 per year for up to 24 months of enrollment, with the total program cost per individual capped at \$40,000. Qualified candidates must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution recognized by the Department of Education. For FY-14, Navy-relevant master's degrees are required.

AEV is not authorized for courses used to earn an additional degree for the service member at the same or lower education level. Lower division or prerequisite courses may be authorized if the courses are part of a Sailor's degree program and are listed on their approved education plan.

Applicants should be transferring to (or currently on) shore duty with sufficient time ashore to complete their approved degree program. Applicants on sea duty may apply provided they submit an education plan, with commanding officer endorsement, demonstrating the ability to complete the degree program. Senior enlisted members who have already invested in their professional development by pursuing college education and those who are currently enrolled in a qualifying post-secondary degree program using TA or other financial assistance programs are eligible to apply for the AEV program. Reimbursement for any education expenses incurred prior to participation in AEV is not authorized. AEV and TA benefits may not be used at the same time.

Upon completion of or withdrawal from education for which any authorized expenses were paid, participants shall agree to remain on active duty for a period equal to three times the number of months of education completed or three years, whichever is less. This obligation is discharged concurrently with any other service

obligation program participants may have already incurred. The AEV agreement does not obligate the Navy to retain the member on active duty.

The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy will convene the AEV Program selection board in June 2014 and program selectees will be expected to enroll in studies in the fall 2014 term.

Deadline for applying for FY-14 programs is May 24, 2014. Applications should be sent to Naval Education and Training Command (N523), 250 Dallas Street, Pensacola, FL, 32508-5220. See NAVADMIN 072/14 for specific requirements and application guidelines. Packages must be endorsed by the applicant's commanding officer and command master chief. For more information on the program, call Master Chief Electronics Technician (EXW/FPJ) Richard Simpson, AEV and enlisted learning & development coordinator (NETC N523) at (850) 452-7268 (DSN 459) or email at Richard.L.Simpson@Navy.mil.

The AEV program is a supporting element of the Enlisted Learning and Development Strategy, which includes post-secondary education as an integral part of the career roadmap for each rating career track.

Additional information about the AEV program may be viewed on the Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) Web site (www.nko.navy.mil). After logging on, click the 'learning' tab, then go to the 'quick link' –learning master link for AEV located on the left hand side of the page.

For more information on the Naval Education and Training Command, visit <https://www.netc.navy.mil/>.

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