

# HELPING VETERANS LAUNCH OR GROW THEIR OWN BUSINESSES



America's military veterans have served and protected our nation while developing skills in risk management, leadership and performing under pressure. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is honored to help veterans translate those skills into successful civilian ventures through the Veterans Entrepreneurship Program (VEP).

Now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, the VEP is a nationally recognized, immersive program designed around hands-on learning, one-on-one mentorship and exposure to inspiring role models. Our mission is simple but powerful: to foster the growth of profitable, veteran-owned businesses.

Guided by world-class faculty, accomplished entrepreneurs and subject-matter experts, participants take part in a challenging, interactive and transformative experience—one that equips them to turn their service-honed skills into entrepreneurial success.

**“VEP gives you a community. You’re surrounded by fellow veterans who understand your mindset, your mission and your drive. As a disabled minority woman veteran, I felt seen, supported and empowered. VEP helped me clarify my vision and gave me the confidence to scale my businesses with purpose.”**  
– Anjanette Wheeler, VEP 2025 graduate



## VEP SCHEDULE

Application deadline: April 30, 2026

### VEP Phase I

Concept Development and Self-Study | May 26-June 29, 2026

- Five-week online curriculum, guided by Rollins College of Business faculty and staff
- Build understanding of key business issues and prepare for Boot Camp
- Includes 12 months of free access to LivePlan business planning software

### VEP Phase II

VEP Boot Camp | July 18-25, 2026

- Intensive eight-day residency in Chattanooga, Tennessee
- Hands-on workshops and networking with business experts
- Learn the “nuts and bolts” of launching and growing a business

### VEP Phase III

Advising and Venture Development | August - December 2026

- Five months of continued advising and venture support
- Opportunities to apply for grant funding



#### Will Radford (VEP 2017)

Will was recognized as one of Nashville’s “40 Under 40” in 2019. He founded development company AMPM Solutions Inc., the NIA House Montessori School in Nashville, and Roasted, a restaurant offering cuisine infused with the spirit of African American culture. In 2024, he was appointed Assistant Vice President of Planning, Design, Construction and Business Operations at Tennessee State University.



#### Norma Lubin (VEP 2018)

Norma is the founder and CEO of LIFE3 Academy Charter School, an institution committed to cultivating lifelong learners. Since opening its doors in 2021, LIFE3 Academy has served over 500 students in grades K–6. In 2025, Norma expanded her vision by launching the Veterans Founders Academy for Public Charters.



#### Paul Whitten (VEP 2023)

In October 2023, Paul launched Nashville Adventures, a company offering customized walking tours that highlight the rich history, vibrant culture and legendary music scene of Nashville, Tennessee. The business reached profitability within its first year, and his business continues to grow to meet the needs of tourists and locals in the area.

### Sample topics include:

- **Business plans:** Develop a strategy to help you plan, fund and grow
- **Accounting:** Understand key numbers that guide decisions
- **Funding:** How much you need and how to get it
- **Operations:** Service delivery, costs, suppliers, and systems
- **Marketing:** Identify and reach your audience effectively
- **Risk management:** Common risks and how to protect your business

# IMAGINE BELIEVE CREATE



## COST

- Free to all selected veterans
- Includes instruction and program materials
- Phase II Boot Camp: travel, lodging and meals fully covered

## ELIGIBILITY

VEP is open to veterans who:

- Have separated (or are separating) from active duty with an honorable discharge
- Have a business idea or an existing business less than three years old

Preference is given to veterans who are:

- Service-connected disabled (as designated by the VA), or
- Service-distinguished for exemplary military conduct

## HOW TO APPLY

The VEP has a selective application process that reflects the unique opportunity and valuable resources being offered to eligible veterans. Successful candidates demonstrate a strong interest in entrepreneurship and venture creation, the motivation to own and operate a business, and a high likelihood of active participation and completion of the entire VEP curriculum.

For more information, contact  
VEP Director Sandy Cordell, PMP

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## GARY W. ROLLINS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

The Gary W. Rollins College of Business at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a nationally ranked, AACSB-accredited business school that produces academically prepared and business-world ready graduates for a competitive global environment.

The Rollins College of Business recognizes the role of entrepreneurship in the global economy and places a priority on entrepreneurship education. Our graduates receive a thorough foundation in critical aspects of business, such as marketing, accounting, management and finance, as well as relevant entrepreneurial topics such as cash flow management. Courses in creativity, innovation, and business plans for new ventures help round out the College's fastest growing major. UTC students also benefit from the insight and experience of the area's most successful entrepreneurs.

## VEP CONSORTIUM

In order to continue to serve as many of our nation's veterans as possible, VEP is also offered at **Oklahoma State University** and the **University of Florida**. For more information about their programs and schedules please visit their websites:

OSU: [business.okstate.edu/riata/veterans/](https://business.okstate.edu/riata/veterans/)  
UF: [warrington.ufl.edu/vep](https://warrington.ufl.edu/vep)



## NATIONAL VETERANS ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

*Empowering America's Veterans*

 **GARY W. ROLLINS  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA

Chattanooga, Tennessee

APPLY TODAY AT  
**UTC.EDU/VEP**



The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a comprehensive, community-engaged campus of the University of Tennessee System. UTC is an EEO/AA/Title IV & IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA Institution. 25095547-26

