

# Texas Association of Collegiate Veteran Program Officials FY26 Conference Agenda

**MONDAY, 9 MARCH 2026**

**Pre-Conference Workshops**

9:00 am – 9:15 am	<b>Introduction to TACVPO</b> <i>TACVPO Board</i>	Constellation/Virtual
9:15 am – 10:00 am	<b>Vocational Flight Programs*</b> <i>Heather Cates, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation/Virtual
10:00 am – 11:00 am	<b>IHL Flight*</b> <i>Heather Cates, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation/Virtual
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Program Approvals - Flight Schools &amp; IHL w/ Flight</b> <i>Dexter Smith, Texas State Approving Agency</i>	Constellation/Virtual
<b>12:00 pm – 1:30 pm</b>	<b>LUNCH</b> <i>On your own</i>	
<b>1:30 pm – 5:00 pm</b>	<b>Registration Desk Open</b>	<b>Main Lobby</b>
1:00 pm – 2:15 pm	<b>VA New SCO Training*</b> <i>TBD, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation/Virtual
2:20 pm – 3:35 pm	<b>VA Advanced SCO Training*</b> <i>TBD, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation/Virtual
3:40 pm – 4:55 pm	<b>VA Advanced SCO Training*</b> <i>Chelsea Jackson, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation/Virtual
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	<b>Let's Rodeo, TACVPO! President's Reception</b> <i>All Conference Attendees welcome (hors d'oeuvres provided + cash bar)</i>	Pool Deck <b>Sponsored by</b> <b>Combined Arms</b>
	<b>DINNER</b> <i>On your own</i>	

# TACVPO Conference Agenda

TUESDAY, 10 MARCH 2026

General Session

<b>7:00 am – 8:00 am</b>	<b>BREAKFAST</b> <i>On your own</i>	
<b>10:00 am – 3:00 pm</b>	<b>Registration Desk Open</b>	<b>Main Lobby</b>
<b>8:00 am – 5:00 pm</b>	<b>Resource Fair</b>	<b>Prefunction Area</b>
<b>8:30 am – 8:45 am</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony</b> <i>Tila Jernigan, TACVPO President</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>8:45 am – 9:45 am</b>	<b>Keynote Speaker</b> <i>Katie Cook, Lt. Col, USMC &amp; Former Blue Angels pilot</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>9:45 am – 10:00 am</b>	<b>AM BREAK</b>	<b>The Landing</b>
<b>10:00 am – 11:00 am</b>	<b>Department of Veterans Affairs Update*</b> <i>Kenneth Smith, Executive Director, VBA Education Services</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>11:00 am – 11:45 am</b>	<b>National Association of State Approving Agencies</b> <i>Rebecca Ryan, NASAA President</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>11:45 am – 12:00 pm</b>	<b>Texas Veterans Commission Updates</b> <i>David Salgado, Director, TVC Veterans Education</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>12:00 pm – 1:00 pm</b>	<b>LUNCH</b> <i>Buffet lunch provided</i>	<b>The Landing</b>
<b>1:00 pm – 2:00 pm</b>	<b>Veteran Education Excellence Recognition Award (VEERA) Presentations</b> <i>Texas Veterans Commission</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>2:00 pm – 2:30 pm</b>	<b>Combined Arms</b> <i>Johnn Smith, Southeast Texas Regional Manager</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>2:30 pm – 2:45 pm</b>	<b>PM BREAK</b>	<b>The Landing</b>
<b>2:45 pm – 3:30 pm</b>	<b>Texas Workforce Commission Updates</b> <i>Gabriel Lopez, Texas Workforce Commission</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>3:30 pm – 4:15 pm</b>	<b>College Credit for Heroes</b> <i>Bob Gear, Texas Workforce Commission</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>4:15 pm – 5:00 pm</b>	<b>State Voc Rehab</b> <i>Arthur Jones, Texas Workforce Commission</i>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>

# TACVPO Conference Agenda

WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2026

Breakout Sessions

7:00 am – 8:00 am	<b>BREAKFAST</b> <i>On your own</i>	
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	<b>Resource Fair</b>	<b>Prefunction Area</b>
8:00 am – 3:00 pm	<b>Q&amp;A with TVC Veterans Education Staff</b> <i>1x1; walk-ins welcome; SAA and Hazlewood</i>	<b>Timber Grove</b>
8:00 am – 9:00 am	<b>Dixon Center for Military and Veteran Services</b> <i>Wendy Lang, Senior Advisor for Policy and Research</i>	<b>River Oaks 70</b>
	<b>Lessons Learned Moving Beyond Spreadsheets For VA Benefit Management</b> <i>Gisele Hinojosa, MilVet Navigator</i>	<b>Museum Park 70</b>
	<b>VA - 85/15 Requirements*</b> <i>Kate Caruso, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	<b>Constellation West</b>
	<b>Hazlewood - Database Overview &amp; Updates</b> <i>Dominique Gill, Texas Veterans Commission</i>	<b>Constellation East</b>
9:00 am – 9:15 am	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>The Landing</b>
9:15 am – 10:15 am	<b>Lone Star College</b> <i>David Yebra, Chief Veteran's Officer</i>	<b>River Oaks 70</b>
	<b>State Tuition Assistance Program</b> <i>Patrick Yonnone and Aliea Williams, Texas Military Department</i>	<b>Museum Park 70</b>
	<b>VA - Work Study Programs*</b> <i>Dawn Blue, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	<b>Constellation West</b>
	<b>Uniform Application - NCDs &amp; Government Agencies</b> <i>Anthony Williams, State Approving Agency (TVC)</i>	<b>Constellation East</b>
10:15 am – 11:15 am	<b>Empowering Faculty: Implementing Green Zone Training to Support Military-Connected Students Across Campuses</b> <i>Siara McMahon, Lone Star College</i>	<b>River Oaks 70</b>
	<b>Innovative Approaches to Military-Connected Student Success</b> <i>Jessica Hodges, Marissa Pina, Breanna Greer, Ontoria Robinson, and Jamie Gregory - Dallas College</i>	<b>Museum Park 70</b>
	<b>VA - Compliance Surveys*</b> <i>Heather Cates, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	<b>Constellation West</b>
	<b>Uniform Application - Accredited IHLs</b> <i>Andrea Watts, State Approving Agency (TVC)</i>	<b>Constellation East</b>

# TACVPO Conference Agenda

WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2026

Breakout Sessions

11:15 am – 12:15 pm	<b>Business Office Best Practices</b> <i>LeAnn Picket, Texas A&amp;M University</i>	River Oaks 70
	<b>NVEST Project</b> <i>Monteigne Long and Abby Kinch</i>	Museum Park 70
	<b>VA - Debt Management Center*</b> (tentative) <i>Nicole Haselberger, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation West
	<b>Risk-based Surveys &amp; Supervisory Visits</b> <i>Pat Gaudet, State Approving Agency (TVC)</i>	Constellation East
12:15 pm – 1:45 pm	<b>LUNCH</b> <i>Buffet lunch provided</i>	Vista Ballroom
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	<b>Hazlewood Act Automation Project</b> <i>Reuben Aleman, The University of Texas at San Antonio</i>	River Oaks 70
	<b>NVEST Working Group Meet-up</b> <i>Working Group Members</i>	Museum Park 70
	<b>VA - Enrollment Manager*</b> <i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation West
	<b>SAA Approvals – Program Lists</b> <i>Andrea Watts, State Approving Agency (TVC)</i>	Constellation East
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>PM BREAK</b>	Rio Grande lobby
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>The SVO Blueprint: Building and Sustaining Dynamic SVO's Across Texas</b> <i>Siara McMahan, Lone Star College</i>	River Oaks 70
	<b>Combined Arms</b> <i>Johnn Smith, Southeast Texas Regional Manager</i>	Museum Park 70
	<b>VA - Non-College Degree Training*</b> <i>Sharon Coverdell, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation West
	<b>TVC Education Outreach</b> <i>Dominique Gill, Texas Veterans Commission</i>	Constellation East
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	<b>How to Build Partnerships with Staff and Faculty that Best Support Veteran Students</b> <i>Paul Calhoun &amp; Jazz Nixon, University of Houston-Downtown</i>	River Oaks 70
	<b>VA - VR&amp;E* (tentative)</b> <i>Kelly Shupak, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Museum Park 70
	<b>VA - Debt Management Center*</b> (tentative) <i>Nicole Haselberger, Department of Veterans Affairs</i>	Constellation West
	<b>Hazlewood Act – Hazle-Talk: Bring Your Best and Worst Situations for Panel Discussion with Q&amp;A</b> <i>Dominique Gill, Texas Veterans Commission</i>	Constellation East

## TACVPO Conference Agenda

THURSDAY, 12 MARCH 2026

Business Day

<b>8:00 am – 9:00 am</b>	<b>NETWORKING BREAKFAST</b>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>8:00 am – 1:00 pm</b>	<b>Mentorship Break-out/Sign-up</b>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>9:00 am – 11:00 am</b>	<b>TACVPO Membership Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• President Report</li><li>• Treasurer Report</li><li>• New Direction / Discussion</li><li>• Election of Officers</li><li>• By-Laws Review</li><li>• Other New Business</li></ul> <b>CONCLUSION and Closing Remarks</b>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>11:00 am – 12:00 pm</b>	<b>New/Old Board Members Meeting</b>	<b>Constellation Ballroom</b>
<b>12:00 pm</b>	<b>Hotel Checkout</b> <b>HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME!</b>	