



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR INFORMATION:

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September 29, 2004

NCSU Libraries Presents GI Bill Exhibit and Symposium

The NCSU Libraries will present an exhibit in the D. H. Hill Library between October 14 and December 22, 2004, to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 and to honor the veterans who have attended NC State. Combining historical materials with testimonies of current students, *Transforming Society: The GI Bill Experience at NC State* documents the local impact of one of the best-loved and most successful public policies ever adopted in the United States.

In addition, on November 12, between 1:00 and 4:30 p.m., the NCSU Libraries will host a symposium on "The GI Bill Experience" at the McKimmon Center. Following a keynote address by **Milton Greenberg**, who wrote *The GI Bill: The Law That Changed America*, there will be a panel discussion moderated by **Robert Serow** of the NCSU College of Education. Panelists will include **Suzanne Mettler** of Syracuse University, who is currently at work on



NC State, 1948.



Milton Greenberg.



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a book entitled *Civic Generation: The GI Bill in the Lives of World War II Veterans*; Lt. Col. (Ret.) **Sion Harrington III**, the military collection archivist at the North Carolina Office of Archives and History; and **Ted J. Meyer**, who served in World War II before obtaining a B.S. from NC State in 1948. Other veterans, students, and members of the community will have the opportunity to share their stories and perspectives in smaller breakout sessions. The symposium will conclude with remarks by former chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court **Burley Mitchell Jr.** (Class of 1966). Greenberg, Harrington, Meyer, and Mitchell studied under the provisions of the GI Bill.

The exhibit draws mainly on University Archives and manuscript materials from the Special Collections Research Center at the NCSU Libraries, including photographs, letters, student essays, campus publications, and artifacts. Professor Serow and librarian Anna Dahlstein interviewed ten current and former

NC State students who took advantage of expanded educational opportunities they earned by serving in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, and other arenas. Their stories have become a part of the University Archives in the form of oral history recordings.

On June 22, 1944, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as "the GI Bill of Rights." Over the past six decades, it has provided approximately 21 million veterans and service members with \$77 billion in benefits for education and training. Today, 90 percent of all eligible military personnel sign up for the latest version of the law, the Montgomery GI Bill.

The GI Bill contributed to the growth of NC State and its transformation from a land-grant state college into a nationally ranked research university. In the late 1940s, around 50 percent of all the college students in the nation were veterans. At NC State, that figure was



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closer to 80 percent. Enrollment doubled in comparison to pre-WWII levels and continued to grow in the 1950s, partially because benefits were extended to those who served in Korea. An average of around 2,000 veterans enrolled at NC State each year until the early 1960s. During this period, the university constructed many buildings, expanded its programs, and rose rapidly in national prominence.

Vice Provost and Director of Libraries Susan K. Nutter is amazed and moved by the number of people she has met over the past year who credit the GI Bill for broadening their opportunities. “So many NC State students were touched by this legislation, and not just following World War II,” she noted. “Even today, the benefits represent the most generous financial aid for college provided by the federal government.”

The exhibit and symposium are free and open to the public. For more information about the events, hours, and parking, visit the Web at <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/exhibits/gibill> or call the NCSU Libraries at (919) 515-7188.

Press kits and high-resolution images from the exhibit are available to members of the media by completing this form: <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/exhibits/gibill/media.html>.

The NCSU Libraries, with more than 3.2 million volumes, over 51,000 print and electronic serials, and hundreds of databases, offers leading-edge resources and services from its central library, the D. H. Hill Library, and four branch libraries. For full information about the NCSU Libraries, visit <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/>.