A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE BOOTS TO BOOKS PROGRAM

Authored by Carol Calandra, Veterans Affairs Commissioner
Hector Escobar, Vice President for Academic Governance

WHEREAS, the Associated Students, Inc. (A.S.I.) is the single recognized voice for over 18,000 students at California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA); and

WHEREAS, a key component of the mission of A.S.I. is to support the provision of service, programs and protections that meet the educational, social, recreational, and cultural needs of the pluralistic community; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 2.2 million (9.2% of the nation's 24 million) veterans or current servicemen and women who reside in California or who are stationed in California (CSU) are encouraged to take advantage of the California State University postsecondary educational option; and

WHEREAS, the number of veterans attending a CSU is expected to increase dramatically as more military personnel serving in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) complete their service; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that 5,000 of the 21,000 veterans and their dependents will use the Montgomery and Post 9/11 GI Bill at CSU postsecondary institutions in all levels of degree programs, including a second degree, a master's degree, or a doctorate; and

WHEREAS, we support the California Troops to College initiative proposed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in March 2006 to provide educational opportunities and assistance to active duty service members and veterans by the State's premier education segments and related agencies; and

WHEREAS, the California State University is committed to expanding outreach programs, academic and financial aid advising, and admission opportunities for active duty service members and eligible veterans; and

WHEREAS, a California State University, Los Angeles "Boots to Books" program model featuring a course designed to provide veterans assistance in making a positive transition to academic and civilian life with components to include managing military readjustment transition issues, interpersonal skills and improving overall health and resilience would align with the California Troops to College initiative; and

WHEREAS, such a course would assist in identifying models of best practices among campus services that support education for veterans in California public universities and support the implementation of such practices in order to more effectively outreach to veterans; and

WHEREAS, returning veterans represent an at-risk campus population in an academic world posing considerable challenges as many individuals returning from military service have not attended formal, traditional academic programs for several years; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of veterans can be described as "nontraditional" learners and many OEF and OIF veterans return with a traumatic brain injury (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or other disabilities that pose substantial barriers to academic success; let it be

RESOLVED, that the Associated Students, Incorporated of California State University, Los Angeles supports the creation and maintenance of a qualified "Boots to Books" program designed to help veterans adapt to the college environment and provide a positive transition step for our service men and women; let it be further

RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be distributed widely, including, but not limited to CSULA President James M. Rosser; CSULA Vice President for Student Affairs Anthony Ross; CSULA Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ashish Vaidya; CSULA Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies Cheryl Ney; the CSULA Academic Senate; CSU Chancellor Charles B. Reed; the CSU Board of Trustees, the California State Student Association, CSULA University Times, and California Governor Jerry Brown to inform them of the A.S.I. commitment to supporting this initiative.