



8/28/12

**HOMEWARD BOUND ADIRONDACKS VETERANS REINTEGRATION ACADEMY
REQUEST TO NEW YORK STATE FOR USE OF THE SARANAC LAKE ARMORY**

HBA BACKGROUND

Homeward Bound Adirondacks (HBA) is a not-for-profit 501c3 public-private partnership organization which was established in 2011 to assist active duty members of the armed forces, veterans and their families make a more successful reintegration in transition from their military life to civilian life. HBA provides integrative programming including biologically-based resiliency skills, historic warrior reentry traditions and restorative health and educational activities in a healing community environment in Saranac Lake.

REINTEGRATION ACADEMY

One of the exciting HBA activities is the Reintegration Academy which will provide a unique opportunity for veterans to begin their educational experience under the GI bill with other veterans. Currently only 3% of recent veterans who have begun their college careers have graduated. This unacceptably low graduation rate is due in part to the difficulty experienced by many veterans making the transition from the military to the campus because of a feeling of isolation and not integrating easily into a combination of academic and civilian life.

The HBA Reintegration Academy will provide the opportunity for 25 veterans at a time to be enrolled in a military-friendly environment with other veterans taking the first 45 credits toward their degree in a specialized curriculum to be developed by Clarkson University in conjunction with North Country Community College and Paul Smiths College to accelerate their post-military careers.

HBA ASK OF NEW YORK STATE

HBA is requesting that New York State make available the use of the underutilized Saranac Lake Armory for 10 years at \$1.00 per year. HBA will assume responsibility for renovating, maintaining and covering the cost of utilities. The benefits to New York State of providing the Saranac Lake Armory to HBA in which to operate the Reintegration Academy are:

- The Reintegration Academy Program will provide a successful bridge to the next phase of veteran's lives.
- HBA can leverage a highly underutilized state asset at no cost to the state and in fact reduce the states operational expenditures for annual maintenance and utilities.
- Economic Development in the North Country, Saranac Lake specifically, will be advanced through a creative public-private partnership leveraging sustainable Federal Department of Defense/VA Funding, and private University contributions.
- The Reintegration Academy Model can be easily replicated in other communities and other states enhancing New York's leadership role in designing effective and efficient programs to assist individuals and families in need.
- The continuum of care for veterans and their families will be enhanced without additional direct costs to New York State or local government.

Bringing Warriors, Veterans and Families ALL the way home

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