



Hibbs Brief *Special Edition*

Hibbs Institute for Business & Economic Research

Tyler Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): A Texas Veteran-Friendly Community

By Dr. Marilyn Young, Hibbs Research Fellow, Professor of Management



On this Veterans Day, I am submitting the Tyler MSA (Smith County) for [designation as a Texas Veteran-Friendly Community](#) through the East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG). I am honored to conduct this research for the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce Veterans Committee and show how Tyler has supported veterans over the years. The criteria for the designation are economic environment, community support, employment, health care, educational/career opportunities, quality of life and future plans. This brief shows just a few of the many initiatives where the community has gone above and beyond to honor our veterans.

First, here are many military and city designations received over the years, along with the veteran economic impact.

Military Designations, Recognitions and Awards

- **Purple Heart City** (2014)
- **Military Friendly Schools®**
The University of Texas at Tyler (Silver)
Tyler Junior College (Gold)
- **Certificate of Appreciation to East Texas Veterans' Community Council (ETVCC)** by the Department of VA for leadership, collaboration and the collective impact on the community (2004).
- **Sea of Goodwill Award** by **Homeward Deployed** for supporting transition in education, health care and employment (2012).



City of Tyler Designations, Recognition and Awards

- **East Texas Retirement City**, East Texas Council of Governments (2014).
- **No. 8 in 10 Best Cities for Veterans** by Livability.com (2016).
- **Tyler Texas Retirement Living**, Texas Real Estate Source (2023).
- **NET Health, Regional Corporate Citizen of the Year**, East Texas Council of Governments, ETCOG, (2023).
- **Tyler rated as No. 1 City in U.S. to Retire** (2024).
- **Tyler rated as No. 1 Best Cities to Move in Texas**, USA Today Homefront (2024).
- **Tyler as 3rd Tourism Friendly Texas Certified Community in Texas** (2024).

Economic Impact

- **\$427.4 million income:** Estimating the Contributions of Veterans to the Tyler MSA Economy (Hibbs Institute for Business & Economic Research, The University of Texas at Tyler, 2022).¹
- **\$628.6 million income:** (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA), 2022).²

Economic Environment

Since veterans may choose to retire, work, continue their education or start a business, Tyler MSA is an excellent area which has a strong economy and excellent quality of life for veterans and their families. Economist Ray Perryman (2024)³ attributed the promising economic forecast to its resilience and diversity. He predicted the area's employment is expected to increase at 1.98%, an increase of 11,900 jobs by 2027.

Economic Measures	Value
Tyler, Texas MSA population	245,209 ⁴
Labor force participation rate	64.6% ⁴
Unemployment rate (July & Aug. 2024)	4.1% ⁵
Median household income	\$68,192 ⁴
Gross Domestic Product (Nominal GDP)	\$14.7 Billion ⁵
Cost of Living Index (CPI), (2023, Q1) (3.8% < U.S.)	96.1 ⁶
Poverty level	11.8% ⁴
Bachelor's degree or higher	27.0% ⁶
Housing: average price sold: Tyler MA	\$271.731 ⁷
Median house value: Tyler MSA	\$253,532 ⁷

Community Support

Here are just a few of the organizations supporting veterans in Tyler: [CampV](#) provides coordination and many resources to more than 700 veterans per month and sponsors the annual [Homeless Veterans Stand Down](#) event.



Special Initiatives

- [Brookshire Grocery Company: Hero for Flight Program](#)
- [City of Bullard: Texas Veterans Military Show](#)
- [City of Whitehouse: Veteran Memorial Highway](#)
- [Texas Wounded Warrior Foundation: Golf Tournaments](#)



Youth Programs

- [Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas: "Red, White & BBQ"](#)
- [Boy Scouts of America](#)
- Junior ROTC at Tyler Legacy and Tyler High School
- [Rose City Young Marines](#)

Health Care

The medical community is one of the fastest growing and most significant industries in the Tyler MSA. With four hospitals and many supporting practices and specialty clinics, Tyler provides world-class health care. Mental health needs are addressed with collaborations between several providers. [Tyler MSA ranks high in health care when compared to 38 other MSAs](#), and the Northeast Texas Public Health District (NET Health) has received several awards and designations.

- **Military/Veteran-Specific**
 - [Tyler Centennial VA Clinic](#) is a state-of-the-art facility that offers primary care and specialty health services, including mental health services, vision, dental, audiology, cardiology, pulmonology, women's health care, pharmacy and more.
 - [Watkins-Logan Texas State Veterans Home](#) has cottages that accommodate 100 veterans and their families, sponsored by [Veteran Land Board](#).

Employment and Career Opportunities

UT Tyler, Tyler Junior College and Texas College have military success centers for veterans and their families. In addition, many opportunities are available for training and development and for assistance in starting and sustaining a business.

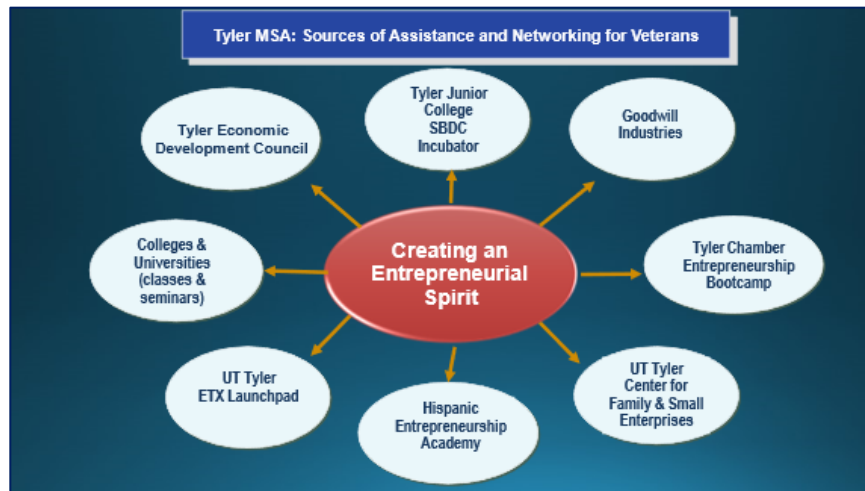
- **Tyler Junior College:** [Military Friendly College® Gold \(2024-25\)](#); Purple Heart College.
- **The University of Texas at Tyler:** [Military & Veterans Success Center](#) Silver Military Friendly®
[Student Veterans Chapter \(SVA\)](#)
- **Texas College:** [Veterans Affairs](#).

- [Tyler Junior College West](#) offers skilled trades and houses the Regional Training & Development Complex (RTDC) in an 84,000 square-foot facility.
- [TJC Continuing Studies](#) provides lifelong personal and professional learning opportunities, as well as the potential to upgrade job-related skills. [Tyler Junior College North in Lindale](#).

- [Goodwill \(Good Tech Academy\)](#)

- ★ [Veterans Job Fair](#)
- ★ [CampV—East Texas Workforce Solutions](#)





On this Veterans Day, we thank those who have served our country. In summary, the veteran community is important to our economic development, and we honor, recognize and support our military residents. Tyler MSA has many recreational, culture, arts and entertainment activities toward an enhanced quality of life for our Veterans as shown by the many links, especially [Visit Tyler](#).

The results for the designation will be received January 2, 2025. The application will be transferred to a report and available in spring 2025 on the [Hibbs Institute site](#). Please contact me for more information and the link: myoung@uttyler.edu

References

¹Perryman, R. (2023). 39th & 40th Perryman Economic Outlook Conferences.

²Reyes, M. (2022). "Estimating the Contribution of Veterans to the Tyler MSA Economy," Hibbs Institute for Business & Economic Research, Soules College of Business, The University of Texas at Tyler.

³Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (2022), "Estimating the Contributions of Veterans Spending on the Tyler MSA/Smith County Economy."

⁴U.S. Census Bureau; QuickFacts.

⁵U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, reported by Federal Reserve Bank.

⁶JobsEQ®, Chmura Economics & Analytics (2024Q1).

⁷Zillow Home Values Index.

Leadership Team

Marilyn Young, Professor of Management, Soules College of Business

Jim Snow, (Lt. Col. Ret.), Co-Founder, CampV

Jackie Clay, Chair, Tyler Area Chamber Veterans Committee

Henry Bell, President, Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce

Partner: East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG)

David Cleveland, Director, ETCOG

David Scott, Project Director, The University of Texas at Tyler

The Hibbs Institute has created a [LinkedIn](#) page that frequently releases business and economic information. Follow our page for future brief updates, announcements and links to our periodic publications.

[Hibbs Brief: Tyler MSA: A Texas Veteran-Friendly Community](#)
(November 2024)