

## Sen. Brown and County Executive FitzGerald host press conference at Tri-C to announce scholarship program for veterans and to urge Congress to extend the VRAP program



(from left) U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown, Tri-C student Everett Chambers III, and Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald

Dec. 16, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown and Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald hosted a press conference at Cuyahoga Community College's Advanced Technology Training Center to urge Congress to extend the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) and to publicize scholarship funding available through Cuyahoga County for VRAP eligible students. Rick DeChant, Executive Director, Tri-C Veterans Initiative spoke at the press conference, as did Everett Chambers III, a Tri-C student who has received VRAP funds.

electronic engineering," said Chambers. "The VRAP program has made it possible for me to move forward in achieving my goals. By choosing me as a participant of the VRAP program my financial burdens have been lightened which allows me to focus more on the most important aspect of school, learning."

"It has been very challenging for me as a veteran in such a tough economic time, to pursue my educational dreams of achieving a degree in

The VRAP program provides up to 12 months of GI Bill benefits to older unemployed veterans who are not eligible for other Veterans Administration education benefit programs. Unless Congress acts, the VRAP program is currently scheduled to expire this year.

The county-funded scholarship for Tri-C student veterans was created with surplus money from the Veterans Services Commission (VSC). County legislation designated a veteran's fund, where excess money from Cuyahoga County's budget could be transferred and used specifically to help local veterans, instead of going back into the county's general fund. 146 scholarships worth \$500 each will be awarded to veterans who fit the below criteria:

- A VRAP participant who is a current student or enrolled for next semester;
- Must have already completed 12 credit hours at Tri-C;
- The first 146 participants to apply and verify eligibility will be awarded the scholarships.