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High school diplomas still available for World War II vets *Program honors those who interrupted their schooling to serve in military*

Nearly 150 Alaskans have received high school diplomas under an ongoing program that recognizes World War II veterans whose military service interrupted their education.

A state law, passed in 2001, allows the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development to award diplomas to World War II veterans, including Alaska Territorial Guard members, who served in the military during the period of August 7, 1940, to July 5, 1947.

To be eligible, the former service member must have died in active service, or have been honorably discharged, or have been released from active duty because of a service-related disability.

World War II veterans with a GED (a general educational development certificate) also are eligible to apply for the diploma. Family members may apply on behalf of deceased or incapacitated veterans.

In passing the law, Alaska joined many other states in what was called Operation Recognition to show gratitude toward World War II veterans.

Mike Livingston of Anchorage helped his father, Robert Livingston of Chignik, receive a diploma in February 2003.

“From my point of view, the World War II veterans served our country,” Mike Livingston said. “They helped protect us from Adolf Hitler. Quite a few left from their high school to serve this country. I think it’s the least we can do to recognize their sacrifices.”

Livingston said his father, who still works at the power plant in Chignik in his late 70s, was very proud to receive his high school diploma. “It meant a great deal to him to be recognized almost 60 years later,” Mike Livingston said.

To apply for a diploma, go to www.eed.state.ak.us/wwll/ and submit the form electronically. Then mail a copy of the discharge papers to State of Alaska, Department of Education & Early

Development, attn: Donna Hurley, 801 West Tenth St., Juneau, AK 99801-1894, or fax them to 907-465-4156.

The state also will accept an affidavit to support the award if documentation is not readily available from the military or other sources. The web site includes an affidavit form to be printed, filled out and notarized.

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