

ACVETEO - ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT,  
TRAINING AND EMPLOYER OUTREACH

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
March 13, 2018

SUMMARY MINUTES

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON  
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND  
EMPLOYER OUTREACH (ACVETEO)

U.S. Department of Labor  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Room N5437  
Washington, D.C. 20210

PARTICIPANTS:

MS. LORI ADAMS, ACVETEO

MS. LOIS A. BETHARDS, Executive Director, American Indian Center  
of Arkansas

MR. CHRIS BUTTON, Department of Labor

MS. ROSYE CLOUD, ACVETEO

MS. MIKA CROSS, Department of Labor VETS

MR. ARIEL DeJESUS, ACVETEO

MR. IVAN DENTON, Director of National Programs

MR. ERIC EVERSOLE, President, Hiring our Heroes

MR. JON JUKURI, National Conference of State Legislatures

MR. TONY LOWE, ACVETEO

MR. BILL METHENY, Director of Field Operations, Department of  
Labor VETS

MR. MATT MILLER, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for  
Veterans Employment and Training, Department of VETS

MR. MIKE MILLER, Department of Defense

MR. STEPHEN PARKER, National Governors Association

MR. ROBERT SCHWRZ, Executive Director, Helmets to Hard Hats

MR. SAM SHELLENBERGER, Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
Operations, Department of Labor VETS

MR. RANDALL SMITH, National Veterans Employment Manager,  
Department of Labor VETS

## WELCOME AND REMARKS

**Ms. Mika Cross** welcomed the attendees present. She presented **Mr. Matt Miller**, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of DOL VETS, who made opening remarks, highlighting the importance the Secretary's goals for this year, which comprise of apprenticeships, military spouses, reforming the TAP program, as well as working on goals from 2017, which include licensing and credentialing of spouses and the portability of the licensing and credentials.

## DVET INTRODUCTIONS

**Mr. Bill Metheny**, Director of Field Operations, Department of Labor VETS, introduced nine of the newer DVETS to the participants. He explained that work that the participants do is important, and that the new DVETs are the beneficiaries of some of the ideas that the participants generate that turn into policy. The DVETs come from all over the country, including Kentucky, Kansas and New York, and this is their first chance to get to Washington, D.C. and learn how the headquarters works.

## ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

**Ms. Cross** reviewed the agenda for the day and explained that the agenda had been revised to include time to discuss some tentative dates to make sure that the participants fulfilled their FY18 meeting requirements. **Mr. Tony Lowe**, ACVETEO and **Ms. Lori Adams**, ACVETEO, were tentatively stepping in for **Chair Ryan Gallucci** and **Ms. Pam Gerassimides** respectively as neither could

attend the meeting. **Ms. Cross** also held a vote to confirm the minutes from the last meeting, which passed unanimously.

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS ON FISCAL YEAR  
2017 REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Ms. Cross** opened by reminding the participants that since the Board is structured off of its three subcommittees, the report recommendations were broken out according to those three subcommittees. She also reiterated that the Board would be covering who on the VETS staff will become the participants' primary liaisons for working with them to make sure that issues are addressed and questions are answered.

**Ms. Cross** continued to recap the Barriers to Employment Subcommittee's proposed recommendations for 2017.

First, the Committee recommended that Congress should take legislative action amendment Title 38 to include paragraph (b) of Section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as it pertains to the definition of homeless veteran to include domestic violence and other life-threatening conditions. This recommendation was completed because the Jeff Miller and Richard Blumenthal Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2016 was passed and amended the definition of homeless veterans.

Second, the Committee recommended the Department of Labor should expand its outreach and education of those eligible for priority services to include active duty and reserve military spouses to address the staggering disparity in unemployment rates.

**Mr. Sam Shellenberger**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations, Department of Labor VETS, highlighted how he is collaborating with DoD and the Secretary's office to make available information ways that military spouses and others who move across state lines are able to access flexibilities on licensing and credentialing. **Mr. Ivan Denton**, Director of National Programs, and **Mr. Mike Miller**, Department of Defense, also commented that there are a couple of bills being introduced to support military spouses, such as a bill introduced by Senator McCain. This bill would primarily set up a separate category for a separate TAP program for military spouses, which means military spouses are eligible to attend TAP on a space-available basis.

Third, the Committee made a recommendation that the Department should take action to expand the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program outreach/facilitation to include out-reach to community-based organizations that provide the type of employment supports identified for veterans, women veterans, military spouses and caregivers, such as mental and physical health care, shelter, childcare and transportation. This is still an on-going process. DOL had incorporated the JVSG program information in VETS' blog posts to ensure VETS' stakeholders better understand JVSG programs.

Fourth, the Committee recommended that the Department should research opportunities to implement a methodology to identify and

share lessons learned and effective practices between American Job Centers with consideration to women veterans, veterans with disabilities and Native American Veterans. This is still an ongoing process in which DOL is adding requirements to the FY18 solicitation language and requirements to ensure the National Veterans Technical Assistance Center (NVTAC) and the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) will collect and repurpose success stories and share via social media in coordination with DOL VETS communications team. **Mr. Denton** highlighted that by working with NVTI and **Mr. Shellenberger**, they were trying to implement Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) and/or Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) tool kits to the public.

Last, the Committee recommended that the Department should re-evaluate its definition of special veteran populations annually to ensure that the designation encompasses all appropriate veteran populations. This is still an ongoing process and this recommendation has been refined in the 2017 recommendations.

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING SUPPORT SUBCOMMITTEE  
DISCUSSIONS ON FISCAL YEAR 2017 REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Ms. Cross** reminded the members that **Chair Gallucci** could not attend the meeting due to personal matters, but she relays that some items that he wants the committee to consider in the coming

year would be licensing and credentialing, apprenticeships, the effectiveness of the HIRE Vets Act program, how to determine that, and military spouse-specific issues such as credentialing, TAP, and hiring. **Mr. Gallucci** also recommended that the committee takes a deeper dive into TAP now that the career technical track is under VETS' purview. He felt the CTTT complemented the higher education track; it would also supplement the DOL EW track; and questioned the requirement of the DOL EW being three days. **Mr. Tony Lowe**, ACVETEO, agreed that the committee should take a deeper dive into the three-day recommendation.

First, the Committee recommended that the Department of Labor (DOL) should continue to ensure Veteran Service Organizations, employers, and other stakeholders to participate in DOL's Employment Workshop curriculum review scheduled for Fiscal Year 2017. This is still an ongoing process. DOL is in the process of the curriculum review and intends to implement the revised Employment Workshop in early 2018.

Second, the Committee recommended veterans service organizations (VSOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) should review the existing Career Technical Training Track (CTTT) curriculum that will be administered and taught by Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) in January 2017. The process is still ongoing. DOL is in the process of a robust curriculum rewrite and intends to implement the revised

track in early 2018.

Third, the Committee made a recommendation that DOL should, in collaboration with its partner agencies, make recommendations on the functionality of a "TAP APP." The process is still ongoing. VETS, in collaboration with ETA, has begun work on the development of the TAP mobile app through ETA's CareerOneStop cooperative agreement.

Last, the Committee recommended that the Department, in collaboration with the Small Business Administration (SBA), should investigate ways to improve how information is provided to small businesses about federal and state funding programs to include tax incentives available for them when they hire Veterans.

DIRECT SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS ON FISCAL YEAR 2017  
REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

First, the Committee recommended the Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) should jointly explore and pursue staff skills training for the non-Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) funded workforce system staff. Training will focus on the unique recruiting, hiring, and retention issues facing the workforce system's veteran customers receiving priority of service.

Second, the Committee recommended VETS should facilitate positive outreach activities with the federal contractor community



at the state and national levels. This should involve ensuring state workforce agencies are aware of and have access to lists of federal contractors with VEVRAA job listing obligations, as well as facilitating and leading DOL's and other federal agencies' in positive outreach to the federal contractor community. The Committee wrote that it believes that VETS and OFCCP have not further engaged for the purposes of practically outreaching the federal contractor community. The Committee also recommends the secretary making this a priority to ensure that federal contractors have the resources to meet their veteran hiring objectives.

Third, the Committee recommended improving veterans' employment outcomes by increasing the number of job opportunities available to veterans and eligible spouses on state job banks and USDOL's veterans.gov. This is an ongoing process and remains an objective of VETS. While the system is nowhere near perfect, VETS should be applauded for moving deliberately to promote the state jobs banks and the resources included on veterans.gov. **Ms. Cross** also mentioned how the Committee is also looking to partner with the Office of the Secretary of Defense's National Resource Directory in order to provide further access through its wounded and wounded care program as well.

Last, the Committee recommended improving coordination and visibility of Department of Labor-funded direct services for veterans by consistently engaging with four key stakeholder groups

to drive veterans and employers to utilize such services. These stakeholder groups include: Department of Labor internal organizations like Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) and the Employment Training Administration (ETA); federal agency partners like the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense; state workforce agencies; and community partners like Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and Military Service Organizations (MSOs). This stage has been marked as complete. VETS moved deliberately to execute this recommendation in FY2017 by routinely convening stakeholder groups to share messaging and resources. There is room for improvement in this area, but it must come from community stakeholders. VETS has executed this recommendation and should continue to push this as a priority.

#### DISCUSSION ON TENTATIVE DATES FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS

After giving an extensive discussion about FY17 Report Recommendations, **Ms. Cross** proposed May 24<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup> and September 20<sup>th</sup> as the FY18 dates to the participants for upcoming meetings to meet the Board's statutory requirement of meeting at least four times regularly throughout this fiscal year. She said she'd send out a Doodle poll for the participants to be able to vote on their own time which dates works best for them.

#### SUBCOMMITTEES DISCUSSION/DEVELOPMENT FISCAL YEAR 2018 WORK PLAN

**Mr. Shellenberger** offered an outsider's perspective on the recommendations. It appeared to him that there are some crossover between the Direct Services and Barriers to Employment Subcommittees and the members could avoid this crossover by structuring the areas of interest without needing to rename the committees. He offered two things for consideration: those things which we have a direct impact on and recommendations for; advice on things that we like you can only influence and how our influence might be most valuable.

**Ms. Rosye Cloud**, ACVETEO, is currently working with different workforce talent groups and has noted that they approach a lot of these issues in a slightly different way, but framing the issues through the lens of how do we re-skill adults effectively in order to re-enter the workforce. She proposed a means to being able to measure and analyze each of the recommendations and how that's going to be validated as either completed or not would be helpful as well. **Mr. Shellenberger** also wrapped up the conversation by briefly touching upon ODAR's participation, which is the Committee's link to disability. By discussing disability, he highlighted the fact that the Committee could also consider it to be a potential barrier to employment. **Mr. Chris Button**, Office of Disability Employment Policy, continued the dialogue about disability is as a barrier to employment. He would like to initiate in more dialogue for looking for more solutions on how to

resolve this issue.

A discussion unfolded between the members about the TAP program. **Mr. Ariel DeJesus**, ACVETEO, opined about the TAP program because he had reviewed a bill regarding off-base TAP's effectiveness. From his understanding it was attempted before but was unsuccessful in its implementation. **Mr. Denton** felt that the TAP program is not designed for someone who's been out of the military already for 3 to 4 years. He wanted to know how the Committee can get those in their 30s and 40s on track to a meaningful career. One thing he suggested was instead of doing off-base TAP, the Committee should opt for providing extra money to the workforce to be able to do more weekend seminars so that there is a greater turnout for these seminars.

**Ms. Cloud** mentioned that she has already started conducting research into this population on how to better eliminate these barriers to employment. She had done some pilot work with a community initiative and found that bringing together the mayor and all the nonprofits supporting employment activity and the economic development side helped coalesce a group that could engage veterans that were seeking scaling and finding mentors and create a type of network around a workforce system.

**Ms. Cross** tasked the group to brainstorm any information the Committee might be able to bring to the next meeting or share with the group that would help inform their recommendations.

**Mr. Shellenberger** suggested bringing in guest speakers, such as Andy Coe, to talk to the Committee about a wide variety of topics, such as understanding the ups and downs of AI and how it can be implemented in ACVETEO. **Mr. Parker** specifically requested for guest speakers to come in to inform the Committee on how gig economy industries such as Airbnb, Lyft, and Uber are impacting the veterans' populations. To follow up on **Mr. Parker's** suggestion, **Ms. Cloud** suggested looking into the Lumina Foundation and Skillful as guest speakers as well as looking into a study conducted by MIT on gig economy industries. **Mr. Jukuri** wanted to know more about more updates related to apprenticeships and to have someone from that task force attend the next meeting. **Ms. Button** concluded by highlighting that ODEP has a project called Job Accommodation Network aimed with getting veterans with disabilities or barriers related to disability into competitive employment.

#### HIRE VETS MEDALLION PROGRAM BRIEF

**Mr. Randy Smith** gave a brief history on the history of the HIRE VETS Medallion Program. The HIRE Vets Act set up the first federal recognition program for employers in the areas of veterans' employment. At its core, if the CEO or CHRO of a company were to apply for the Medallion, it's to attest under penalty of perjury that what they're putting on that application is in fact true.

Next, **Mr. Smith** ran through the criteria for the Medallion Program. There are three categories for the award: small employers, which are 1 to 50 employees; medium employers, which are 51 to 499 employees; and large employers, which are 500 employees and beyond. He also had to go the extra step to define what it means to be an employee for statistical purposes: permanent full-time or permanent part-time. The purpose of this distinction is not to discourage hiring of veterans in temporary employment, but rather to give that level, clear playing field where everyone knows what the stats are.

Each employer category is then broken down between two different subcategories: gold level and platinum level. These two subcategories are two different stages in veteran employment. They are not meant to segment some above others, but rather to just set a standard for the different stages for employers on their journey in veteran employment. For instance: there's the small employer gold level, small employer platinum level, medium employer gold level, and so on.

The Medallion Program then takes these levels and evaluates them based on the following seven requirements: hiring, retention, veteran organization/resource group, leadership program, dedicated HR professional or HR Veterans' Initiative, Pay differential program, and tuition assistance programs. As a final note, there are two checks conducted under USERRA and VEVRA for labor law violations.

While the program will officially be released in 2019, 2018 will be a trial period for 300 applicants. March and April will be open for initial application review, such as working with employers to make sure the application instructions and guidelines are as clear as possible. This initial application review will continue into the May and June time frame.

From July to September, there will be a final review of applications and applicants will be notified of the expected reward by October. In October and November, there will be final checks for under USERRA and VEVRRA. After all final checks are concluded, the official rewards will be awarded to the qualifying participants in November. Process will open up again in January 2019 and close in April 2019. One change in 2019 is that there will be a fee for employers, whereas in 2018 there was no fee for the 300 applicants in the trial phase. **Mr. Smith** reminds the participants that all this information can be found on the HIREVets.gov website.

**Mr. Parker** asked about what happens to those applicants who don't meet the requirements for the HIRE Vets Medallion Program. **Mr. Smith** explained that DOL will give reach out to those applicants and review their application on the areas that need improvement. Applicants have the option to withdraw their application after initial review, and if it still doesn't meet criteria at the end, DOL would deny the application.

**Mr. DeJesus** asked whether or not there will be a limit as to how many applicants can apply for FY2019. **Mr. Smith** reiterated

that for 2018 they are only looking at the first 300 successfully admitted applications for their demon period, however for 2019, there will not be any caps placed on applications.

**Mr. Shellenberger** also asked about how many applicants are expected to apply for 2019. **Mr. Smith** estimated that they would be receiving about 4,200 applicants for 2019.

**Mr. Schwartz** wanted to know how and where the apprenticeship field fits into the equation because the award is more geared towards employers. During this demonstration phase, **Mr. Smith** said he is gathering information and feedback on how to handle this and then come revisit this topic down the line.

#### CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded early and **Mr. Shellenberger** thanked the participants for attending the meeting and for making recommendations for the FY17 report. **Ms. Cross** also reminded the participants that she and her team would send out information and guidelines as well as a Doodle poll on the proposed dates for the remainder of the year. She also expressed looking forward on connecting the subcommittees once the participants have decided on a way ahead with the proper VETS liaisons in order to move their work forward this year. The meeting concluded at 11:33 a.m.