

## Job-Driven Training Principle Seven: Regional Partnerships

### *Washington State DVA Spotlight on Service Case Study*

In 2014, the Federal government held a review of federal training programs in order to identify and implement steps to make these programs more “job-driven.” Job-driven training, defined as “training that is responsive to the needs of employers in order to effectively place ready-to-work Americans in jobs that are available now or train them in the skills needed for better jobs,” includes seven core principles.

#### Seven Core Principles of Job-Driven Training

- Principle One: Engage with Employers
- Principle Two: Earn and Learn
- Principle Three: Use the Data
- Principle Four: Measure Results
- Principle Five: Stepping Stones
- Principle Six: Opening Doors
- **Principle Seven: Regional Partnerships**

Principle Seven, Regional Partnerships, asks providers to coordinate major players in local and regional employment services. The list of partners could include Workforce Investment Boards and the American Job Centers, higher education institutions, labor organizations, philanthropic organizations, state and local human service agencies, vocational rehabilitation agencies, Medicaid agencies, centers for independent living, supported employment providers, community- and faith-based organizations, and other nonprofit organizations.

At the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), employment success comes from solid regional and local partnerships. Dedicated to “serving those who served”, WDVA works on the local, regional, and state level to provide information and resources to veterans. WDVA is a cabinet level state agency serving Washington State which serves a veteran population of approximately 603,000 through a variety of programs to include financial, transition, reintegration, claims, benefit, and behavioral health services.

#### Leveraging Public Partnerships

In May 2013, Governor Jay Inslee signed Executive Order 13-01 (EO 13-01) Veterans Transition Support beginning a new era in veterans employment services in Washington State. Long a respected resource and advocate for veterans in Washington, WDVA has leveraged the public buy-in, resources, and accountability resulting

#### Grantee Spotlight: Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA)

HVRP grantee since: 1987

Current HVRP grants: Two (Rural & Urban)

Other grants/contracts/services: Veterans Financial, Transition, & Reintegration Programs, Behavioral Health Programs, Long Term Care, GPD Transitional Housing, Call Centers, among others.



*Governor Jay Inslee, Cathrene “Cat” Nichols, Strategic Operations Manager*

## **Executive Order EO 13-01: Veterans Transition Support**

There are five key elements of EO 13-01 and WDVA has important roles in each.

1. Creating agency procurement targets from veteran-owned businesses;
2. Developing veteran employment plans at the agency level to increase veteran representation in the workforce;
3. Forming a Veterans Employee Resource Group comprised of veteran state employees to advise on veteran recruitment and retention;
4. Establishing the Washington Military Transition Council (WSMTC) to coordinate local, state, federal, private, and non-profit transition efforts and resources; and
5. Creating a centralized data sharing and warehouse agreement among state agencies to identify veterans and ensure access to VA and other benefits.

from EO 13-01 (see insert) to take its operations to a new level.

Executive leadership has established veterans' employment as a statewide priority in Washington. As a state agency, WDVA has used its unique position to capitalize on that leadership and create a culture of partnership across government, private, and nonprofit agencies. The result is a network of support to ensure veteran access to resources and services that promote long-term stable employment.

### **Partner Education and Training**

Educating partners and promising employment for veterans, including those experiencing homelessness, is always part of the conversation at WDVA. At the heart of WDVA's services is a belief in meeting veterans where they are – figuratively and literally. This approach requires a commitment to making services accessible across geographic and organizational boundaries. To achieve this accessibility goal, WDVA emphasizes education, training, and collaboration with a variety of partners including the Continuum of Care, faith-based organizations, social service agencies, and colleges and universities.

WDVA willingly shares its expertise at conferences and offers free training on a number of topics including

military sexual trauma (MST), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and post traumatic stress (PTS). Through regular communication and follow through, WDVA builds and maintains strong relationships to create a regional support network for veterans.

### **Embedded and Integrated Staff**

WDVA staff work on-site at a number of different partners around the state. The Vet Corps program – funded by an AmeriCorps grant – allows WDVA to place Vet Corps navigators at 52 colleges across the state. These peer to peer navigators provide training and support to college faculty on student veteran issues and help connect student veterans to employment, financial resources, and benefits. WDVA has staff located at other partner organizations as well including Catholic Charities (local SSVF grantee), Rally 6 (veteran service organization), and Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

WDVA is fully integrated with the local Worksource Centers and HVRP staff work closely with the local Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs). They also provide training at the annual summit to educate Worksource staff on HVRP and other employment programs.