

**Joint VA/DOL Program Launches to Retrain 99,000 Unemployed Veterans**

Online Site Opens May 15 for Veterans to Apply for Education Benefits

WASHINGTON – Starting May 15, unemployed veterans between the ages of 35 and 60 can now apply for new benefits to cover education costs for up to one year through a joint Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Labor (DOL) program that focuses on retraining 99,000 veterans for high-demand jobs.

“This important tool will help those who served our country receive the education and training they need to find meaningful employment in a high-demand field,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Veterans are disciplined, hardworking, goal-oriented team members who can play a vital role in helping businesses and the economy grow.”

“Our veterans have made this nation stronger through their service, and they deserve our continued support,” said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. “This new program will help unemployed veterans expand their skills and compete for good jobs,” she added.

As part of a provision of the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, the Veteran Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) allows qualifying veterans to receive up to 12 months of assistance equal to the full-time Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty rate, currently \$1,473 per month.

Veterans can apply on a first-come, first-serve basis for VRAP beginning on May 15, 2012, for programs that begin on or after July 1, 2012. Assistance under this benefit program ends on March 31, 2014.

To complete an application, a veteran will need to know his or her direct deposit information (bank routing number and account number), the name and location of his or her school, the program the veteran wishes to pursue, and the applicable high-demand occupation.

To qualify veterans must:

- Be 35-60 years old, unemployed on the day of application, and not dishonorably discharged
- Start education or training after July 1, 2012, in a VA-approved program of education offered by a community college or technical school leading to an associate degree, non-college degree or a certificate for a high-demand occupation as defined by the DOL
- Not be eligible for any other VA education benefit program (e.g. Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment)
- Not be enrolled in a federal or state job training program within the last 180 days
- Not receive VA compensation at the 100% rate due to individual unemployability (IU)

For more information on VOW, VRAP, high demand occupations, and how to apply, veterans may go to the VOW website at www.benefits.va.gov/VOW, or call VA's Call Centers toll free at 1-800-827-1000, veterans may also access the VRAP application online at www.ebenefits.va.gov through

eBenefits, a joint project between the Department of Defense and VA.

Veterans are also encouraged to visit the nearly 3,000 One-Stop Career Centers across the nation for assistance from staff, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERS), and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists. To find the center near you visit

www.servicelocator.org.

For more information about the Department of Labor's Veterans programs, go to

www.dol.gov/vets/.

Registration is Now Closed for the 2012 NCHV Annual Conference

"Halfway Home: Progress in the Plan to End Veteran Homelessness"

The 2012 NCHV Annual Conference, titled "Halfway Home: Progress in the Plan to End Veteran Homelessness," will be held May 30 to June 1, 2012, in Washington, D.C. As the entire homeless veteran service community convenes, we will take stock of progress at the halfway point in the Five-Year Plan to End Veteran Homelessness and set a course to meet the ultimate goal of eliminating homelessness among veterans by 2015.

Due to overwhelming demand, **registration is now CLOSED for the 2012 NCHV Annual Conference. We are unable to accommodate any walk-up registrations this year.**

View the conference brochure, including the session schedule, by [clicking here](#).

Among the confirmed speakers for this year's opening session are:

- Secretary Eric Shinseki, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Secretary Shaun Donovan, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Kelly Caffarelli, President, The Home Depot Foundation
- Dr. Janet Kemp, Director, VA National Mental Health Program for Suicide Prevention

The keynote speech at the Annual Awards Banquet will be delivered by Anthony Love, Deputy Director, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

Secretary Eric Shinseki received the Jerald Washington Memorial Founders' Award, the highest honor bestowed by the nation's homeless veteran assistance community, in 2010. Halfway through Shinseki's historic Five-Year Plan to End and Prevent Veteran Homelessness, he has overseen the build-up of services and resources that have brought us within reach of ending veteran homelessness. The FY 2013 VA budget request includes record increases for the VA Grant and Per Diem Program, and triple the amount of funding to help at-risk veteran families avoid homelessness.

Secretary Shaun Donovan is the 2011 recipient of the Jerald Washington Memorial Founders' Award. Donovan has overseen the creation of more permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless veterans than anyone in the history of our nation, and is a leading proponent of the HUD-VASH build-out to 60,000 housing vouchers.

Under Kelly Caffarelli's leadership, The Home Depot Foundation has invested \$30 million to address veteran housing issues. At the NCHV Annual Conference, Caffarelli will discuss the potential for funding additional projects in 2012.

Dr. Janet Kemp oversees VA's work on a critical issue within the Five-Year Plan to End Veteran Homelessness: mental health. Last week, the VA Office of Inspector General reported that the presence of mental disorders is the strongest predictor of whether a veteran will become homeless. Dr. Kemp's participation in the opening session will be complemented by multiple breakout sessions

on suicide prevention and mental health issues.

For the latest information on the 2012 NCHV Annual Conference, stay tuned to the [Annual Conference page](#).

DOL-VETS Announces Availability of VWIP Funds

\$12.8 million to fund up to 11 grantees

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), announces a grant competition under the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program (VWIP) in Program Year (PY) 2012, as authorized under section 168 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. Selected programs will assist eligible veterans by providing employment, training, and support services with an emphasis on implementing innovative approaches that increase the number of veteran participants who complete industry-recognized training programs and who receive occupational credentials and certifications to improve their overall competitiveness in the civilian workforce.

The total funding available for this VWIP solicitation is up to \$12.8 million. It is anticipated that approximately 10 to 11 three year awards will be made under this solicitation. Awards are expected to range from a minimum of \$750,000 to a maximum of \$1,250,000. Requests exceeding \$1,250,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated. If there are any residual program funds, the Grant Officer may select qualified application(s) and award grants up to one year after the initial performance period, which will begin between July 1, 2012 and August 1, 2012, and extending through June 30, 2015, as indicated per the notice of award, unless modified by the Grant Officer.

Applications are due June 15, 2012. For more information and to view the full SGA, [click here](#).

Beyond HUD-VASH: Ending Veteran Homelessness

Webinar to be held May 23, 3 p.m. EDT

To accelerate progress towards the goal of ending veteran homelessness by 2015, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) is calling on communities to develop a veteran-centric approach that uses available resources to help our veterans.

USICH is hosting a webinar to share advice from successful comprehensive approaches that bring different resources together to improve housing and life outcomes for homeless veterans. Panelists include USICH's Barbara Poppe, VHA National Director of Homeless Programs Lisa Pape, and more.

The webinar will be held Wednesday, May 23, at 3 p.m. EDT. To register, [click here](#).

Hiring Our Heroes Hiring Fairs Continue Across the Country

Taking place in 400 communities throughout 2012

In March of 2011, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS), launched Hiring Our Heroes, a nationwide initiative to help veterans and military spouses find meaningful employment. Working with a network of 1600 state and local chambers and other strategic partners from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, the goal was to create a movement across America in hundreds of local communities where veterans and military families return every day.

In its first 12 months, Hiring Our Heroes hosted more than 150 hiring fairs in 48 states and the District of Columbia, leading to nearly 10,000 veteran hires.

The program has significantly expanded in 2012, with hiring fairs in 400 communities. The establishment of a stand-alone program for military spouses, and a sustained campaign to enlist the commitments from the small business community to hire veterans and military spouses over the next years are other goals moving forward.

For more information and to view the full schedule of Hiring Our Heroes hiring fairs, [click here](#).

Funding Opportunities

The Dart Foundation is a private family foundation established in 1984 by William A. and Claire T. Dart. Founded in Mason, Michigan, the mid-Michigan area has long been a focal point of Dart Foundation philanthropy. However, grants are also awarded in other areas of the United States and a select number of national and international grants are made. Priority areas for the Foundation are education, health, and community services. The next deadline for applications is June 15. For more information, [click here](#).

The Nordson Corporation Foundation consolidates philanthropic resources dedicated by Nordson Corporation to address community needs. The Foundation provides funding to organizations serving Nordson communities in California, Georgia, Ohio, and New Jersey. Funding is driven by community needs, and application deadlines vary by location. For more information, [click here](#).

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National Coalition for Homeless Veterans

333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003-1148

Mission: The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans will end homelessness among veterans by shaping public policy, promoting collaboration, and building the capacity of service providers.

This newsletter is sent to members of NCHV. If you would like to be removed from our list, please send an email to jdricoll@nchv.org. You can subscribe or view past issues [here](#).