

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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

2020 Final Report

DECEMBER 1, 2020

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Veterans' Employment and Training Service
Washington, DC 20210

December 1, 2020

The Honorable Eugene Scalia, Secretary
U.S Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210

Secretary Scalia:

On behalf of the Department of Labor Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO), it is my honor to present you with the committee's report for 2020.

The members of ACVETEO worked thoughtfully and diligently throughout the year – virtually in many cases due to the challenges posed by the pandemic – to assess the employment and training needs of our transitioning service members, veterans, and certain eligible dependents and provide guidance on the best way to meet those needs going forward. This report contains proposed recommendations to that end, informed by the collective expertise of the committee's membership, briefings and insights provided by the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), and the many private and public partners who participated in this year's committee meetings. In recognition of the tremendous challenges posed by the pandemic, which may have hindered progress by DOL on last year's recommendations, some of them have been reiterated.

Over the last several years, the private and public sectors have made tremendous progress in how our country meets the economic needs of our nation's veterans and provides them with economic opportunities they deserve. Unfortunately, many of those gains have been erased by the extraordinary impact of COVID-19 on our nation and the globe. Additionally, some populations of veterans and military family members face additional challenges as they seek meaningful employment opportunities. This year's report focuses on underserved populations, innovative solutions, and service delivery, offering recommendations on the best way to meet needs—both nationally and at the community level.

On behalf of the committee and its membership, please accept our gratitude for the opportunity to serve our nation's veterans and their families through ACVETEO. We are honored to work with you and the VETS team, which has provided invaluable support and pivoted smoothly to a virtual environment, on our collective mission. The Committee looks forward to our continued work together.

Sincerely,

Kayla M. Williams

Kayla M. Williams
Chair, Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach
Program Director, Center for a New American Security

PART I

Executive Summary

Congress established the Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO) in 2007 under the authority of Section 4110 of Title 38, U.S. Code. ACVETEO is a non-discretionary federal advisory committee and is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App.2.

ACVETEO consists of 14 members - a diverse group of veterans from each military branch, as well as the value-added experiences from civilian subject matter experts with extensive experience in employment policy, veterans' services, and workforce development. The committee receives extensive expert support not only from DOL, but also from a number of additional ex-officio members from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DOD), Small Business Administration (SBA), and Office of Personnel Management.

ACVETEO assesses the employment and training needs of our veterans. Such needs may include transition assistance, protection of employment and reemployment rights, education, skills training, and integration into the workforce, among others, as well as assisting the DOL Assistant Secretary of Veterans' Employment & Training Service (VETS) in outreach activities to employers. ACVETEO is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness with which existing DOL programs deliver required services to America's veterans and, where deficiencies are detected, to recommend appropriate remedial action.

The 2020 report of ACVETEO provides ten recommendations and supporting rationales to the Secretary of Labor and Congress to address concerns and issues relevant to federal employment and transition assistance for the military and veteran communities. This year's report focused on three specific areas under the purview of the Department of Labor (DOL):

- Underserved Populations,
- Innovative Veteran Training and Employment, and
- Service Delivery.

Great progress was made on overall veteran unemployment in previous years due to collaborative efforts by public, private, and nonprofit organizations. Unfortunately, many of those gains were erased by the unprecedented job loss and economic crisis caused by the global coronavirus pandemic. In addition, there were still segments of the military population, including military spouses, who continued to struggle as they searched for meaningful employment opportunities even before the pandemic struck. This year's report focuses on underserved populations, innovative programs designed to serve them and the larger transitioning military and veteran populations, and how services are being delivered, making a series of ten recommendations across these three categories.

Our report has three main parts including: (1) this executive summary; (2) a summary of our 2020 recommendations; and (3) a review of the 2020 recommendations with their supporting rationales. We look forward to continuing our important work together on behalf of our veterans and their families.

PART II

Summary of 2020 Recommendations

Underserved Populations

1. The Secretary of Labor should expand eligibility for DVOP intensive services to:
 - a. Spouses of veterans, for a maximum of five years post transition. Veteran spouses should be considered “covered persons,” and eligible for priority of service, after all other eligible veterans are served but before all other non-veterans.
 - b. Any subgroup of veterans with an unemployment rate more than 20% higher than the overall veteran unemployment rate who are not otherwise eligible for DVOP services (lacking one of the SBEs or not in an eligible population already identified). As veterans, these subgroups are already eligible for priority of service for all DOL-funded employment and training programs.
2. Consistent training should be provided to all non-JVSG staff who serve veterans without Significant Barriers to Employment or not in a targeted population in an American Job Center, utilizing existing available resources of the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI).
3. DOL should release an annual report assessing unemployment, labor force participation, and other key measures for veterans by various demographic characteristics (including race, gender, and disability).

Innovative Veteran Training and Employment

4. DOL VETS should consult subject matter experts from relevant government agencies, for-profit companies and not-for-profit organizations to identify the training needs that are necessary (hard and soft skills) in the current economy and the ‘next’ economy, and how training should be delivered.
5. DOL VETS should lead an effort with DOD, VA, Trade Associations, the Services, and the relevant business community to transform the current programming offered to alleviate unemployment to include preparing TSMs for critical roles needed in the economy where the available workforce is understrength.
6. DOL VETS should compile and share best practices and platforms learned as a result of past and current success with apprenticeships, on-the-job training (OJT), online workshops, online learning, and use of virtual technology.
7. The Secretary of Labor should support an extension of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) to match the timeline of the GI Bill to benefit protected class veterans who may choose education right after service and in many other ways.

Service Delivery

8. VETS should seek to integrate all DOL programs [such as American Job Centers, Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), and the Transition Assistance Program] at the community level.
9. DOL should seek to integrate their community-based programs with other veteran- and family-focused government programs.
10. DOL VETS should consider collaborating with other government agencies (such as Department of Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, etc.) to establish an Ambassador Program that can work in communities with established veteran-serving nonprofits to help recruit clients, spread the word, and promote DOL services for veterans.

PART III

Recommendations and Rationales by Specific Areas: Underserved Populations, Innovative Veteran Training and Employment, and Service Delivery

Underserved Populations

As referenced in the 2018 and 2019 ACVETEO reports, different subpopulations in the broader veteran community experience a variety of barriers and challenges that hinder their abilities to fully participate in the civilian workforce. This has been acknowledged in the past by a variety of organizations. For example, Congress established Centers and Advisory Committees on women veterans and minority veterans in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Labor established a women veterans' program. This Committee holds the opinion that broad and sweeping efforts to address economic and employment concerns among veterans should be supplemented by strategies and programs that specifically target various subpopulations, particularly those that have been traditionally underserved, including but not limited to spouses and minority veterans. Accordingly, the Committee makes the following recommendations to advance impactful service delivery to traditionally underserved subpopulations that are experiencing additional barriers to employment.

Recommendation 1. The Secretary of Labor should expand eligibility for DVOP intensive services to:

- a. Spouses of veterans, for a maximum of five years post transition. Veteran spouses should be considered "covered persons," and eligible for priority of service, after all other eligible veterans are served but before all other non-veterans.
- b. Any subgroup of veterans with an unemployment rate more than 20% higher than the overall veteran unemployment rate who are not otherwise eligible for DVOP services (lacking one of the SBEs or not in an eligible population already identified). As veterans, these subgroups are already eligible for priority of service for all DOL-funded employment and training programs.

Recommendation Rationale:

The Secretary has already identified spouses serving as caretakers of wounded, ill, or injured service members as eligible for DVOP services. Making all veteran spouses eligible for individualized career and support services for five years post transition would build on the recognition that spouses play an important role in a veteran's military service and are both assets to our national defense and their communities across the nation.

The DOD estimated unemployment among active duty military spouses at 24 percent in 2020,¹ three times higher than the national unemployment rate for August 2020 reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is despite the fact that 40 percent of military spouses have college degrees, compared to only 29.7 percent of the general population.² The challenges that drive higher unemployment rates among Active Duty military spouses are likely to persist in the first few years after the servicemember has transitioned to veteran status, impacting the financial stability of the entire family. Providing career services to this population would help reduce unemployment, promote career opportunities and family-sustaining wages, and positively affect the economy.

¹ DOD Releases Military Spouse Licensure Report, February 24, 2020, <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Releases/Release/Article/2091431/dod-releases-military-spouse-licensure-report/#:~:text=Military%20spouses%20face%20a%2024,higher%20than%20the%20general%20population.>

² The Council of Economic Advisers, "Military Spouses in the Labor Market," May 2018, [https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/cea-report-military-spouses-labor-market/.](https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/cea-report-military-spouses-labor-market/)

The VOW Act requires DVOP specialists to place maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally challenged. Veterans who are included in groups of high unemployment would meet the economic standard, but may not have a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many states reported they had the capacity to serve additional eligible persons. Since the pandemic forced temporary closures of most American Job Centers, states have adapted their service delivery models to provide a variety of virtual services for veterans and other persons, creating more efficiencies and opportunities without impacting capacity. All states continue to conduct relationship building, outreach and recruitment activities with other service providers to seek out new Significant Barriers to Employment and priority category veterans, and make referrals to non-JVSG funded programs such as State Vocational Rehabilitation, Goodwill, SNAP and TANF. Adding both veteran spouses, and veteran subgroups experiencing high unemployment would not detract from their ability to serve SBE veterans and other eligible populations. Since these groups may already be accessing the services of their local American Job Center, DVOP specialists would be able to focus on providing services at the center to individuals who want and need assistance, and do so in a cost-effective manner.

Finally, adding these new groups could have a positive effect on the Uniform National Threshold Entered Employment Rate (UNTEER). According to DOL VETS, the UNTEER was 58.2% in 2019. Eleven states and territories failed to meet 90% of the threshold (equating to 52.4%), and were subject to review and a potential corrective action plan. In several low-population areas, the number of individuals who have left the program was very low, and the impact of adding more eligible persons to the formula could mean the difference between success and failure.

Recommendation 2. Consistent training should be provided to all non-JVSG staff who serve veterans without Significant Barriers to Employment or not in a targeted population in an American Job Center, utilizing existing available resources of the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI).

Recommendation Rationale: DVOP specialists and Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) are required to complete a prescribed series of trainings offered through the NVTI within 18 months of hire. There is no similar training requirement for non-JVSG staff who serve non-SBE veterans, although they may attend NVTI training funded by VETS on a space available basis, and at no cost to the state. States can also arrange to have NVTI come to their state to deliver on-site training. Some states have taken advantage of these opportunities. States that do not send non-JVSG staff to NVTI have reported they expect the DVOP specialists and LVERs to train their coworkers. They also report using VETS personnel (state-based DVETs, ADVETs and VPAs), on-the-job training, self-directed reading, e-learning, assigned mentors and ESGR.³ NVTI is mandated by law (Title 38, Section 4109 USC) to provide specific training to certain groups, including employment service personnel, VETS, and state staff. There is no equivalent mandate that the states provide training to non-JVSG staff who serve veterans and other eligible persons.

Training should be consistent and uniform for all staff who serve veterans. The current model does not provide that, and has people working outside of their designated roles and responsibilities at both the state and federal level. Non-JVSG staff would better serve their customers—the non-SBE and non-priority veterans—with consistent training and uniform content. Many non-JVSG staff are not veterans, and are unfamiliar with the military. American Job Center staff who serve veterans with non-service-connected disabilities would be better prepared to serve them if they had additional disability-specific training.

³ 2016 NASWA Professional Staff Skills Training Assessment for the Workforce System

NVTI has already developed applicable training, so no additional expense would be incurred with curriculum development. Several courses are available on-line, making it even more cost-effective and efficient for states to train non-JVSG staff.

In addition, as with recommendation 1, enacting this recommendation could also have a positive effect on UNTEER.

Recommendation 3. DOL should release an annual report assessing unemployment, labor force participation, and other key measures for veterans by various demographic characteristics (including race, gender, and disability).

Recommendation Rationale: After focused efforts by partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sector, unemployment rates for veterans as a whole are equal to or lower than unemployment rates among non-veterans. However, this positive news obscures variations in veteran unemployment among various subpopulations. For instance, unemployment among male African American veterans averaged 4.6 percent in 2018, higher than the 3.4 percent unemployment rate among their white counterparts. In addition, unemployment is significantly higher among Native Americans, who serve in the military at higher rates; specific reporting on the rate of unemployment among Native American veterans will help DOL determine whether specific, targeted programming would benefit this population. It appears that these trends may be exacerbated in the general population during the pandemic. However, while VETS releases detailed annual reports on women veterans' rates of unemployment, labor force participation, employment by sector, and more, similarly detailed analyses are not conducted and published for other minority veterans.

Targeted and effective interventions to improve employment outcomes rely upon having access to accurate, detailed information. With access to detailed demographic breakdowns of key metrics, the Department of Labor itself, as well as its partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, can improve outreach and programmatic strategies toward specific segments of the veteran population whose outcomes are lagging behind others. Fulfilling this recommendation will also support Recommendation 1, which relies on having an awareness of which subpopulations are experiencing higher levels of unemployment. The factsheets and webinars produced by the VETS Women Veteran Program provide an excellent example of the sort of timely, in-depth, and relevant analyses and presentation upon which to model this expanded reporting.

Innovative Veteran Training and Employment

Over the last several years much has been done to reshape the way in which transitioning service members secure careers after military service. From Skillbridge to technical training programs to professional development programs the private and public sectors have created and executed a host of programs to deliver greater opportunities to service members and their families. This subcommittee examined these programs to better understand how they meet the current need of TSM's given COVID as well as the rapidly changing landscape in the employment space due to virtual work, AI, Automation and broader technological and workplace change.

Recommendation 4: DOL VETS should consult subject matter experts from relevant government agencies, for-profit companies and not-for-profit organizations to identify the training needs that are necessary (hard and soft skills) in the current economy and the 'next' economy, and how training should be delivered.

Rationale: The recent and on-going COVID-19 pandemic has caused abrupt changes to the

economy, employment and education. Which of these many facets will be temporary and which long-lasting have yet to be determined. What has not changed are the many veterans who transition out of the military each day and are stepping into a civilian market that looks very different from when they first entered the military. They have questions on what career or business opportunities to pursue in this changing environment, what types of education and training is necessary and how will it be delivered, what new opportunities are there that could benefit from someone with skills honed in the military, who can help them navigate the changing waters and, ultimately, what it best for them and their families. Each one of these questions is significant and deserves further investigation, however, the specific scope of this proposed recommendation is to focus on state and local delivered education and training efforts directly related to veterans' employment. Essentially, how will training/education delivery models delivered at a local level respond to the changing economic environment and meet the needs of veterans?

Each year, approximately 200,000 service members leave military service equating to almost 1,300 new veterans and their families every day. Some pursue higher education, some seek jobs consistent with military experience, some seek something new and some are unsure of which path to take. Transitioning service members and veterans seek information from a variety of entities to make their best choice and many find that that decision leads to a training or educational experience to meet their ultimate goal.

State and local communities are very well connected to the businesses in their areas and often have specifically focused training, employment and hiring programs tailored to their needs. As businesses respond to the "new normal" or "new economy" they are looking for employees to fill a variety of open positions; while businesses may need to make modifications to their business model (safe distancing, telework, distributed team building, etc.), so, potentially, do the programs that support them. Local training and educational efforts are typically able to respond very quickly to developing local business needs and can be attractive to those seeking employment.

The potential range of skills necessary for employment is wide and varied. Some transitioning service members and veterans need additional training for a specific career path to meet local guidelines and licensure, some need a new skill set, some need soft skills, some need resume writing and interviewing techniques, some need a little and some need a lot. And with the uncertainties of the recovering economy, flexibility is key.

Fortunately, while the needs are potentially wide-spread and varied, there is an amazing number of public and private efforts, labor unions, trade organizations, philanthropic organizations, veterans organizations, task forces, for-profit and not-for-profit educational institutions, businesses and many others who offer assistance, providing degrees, certificates, endorsements, on-the-job training, workshops, seminars and other valuable information, all determined to meet the need. The questions to be explored is are there new skills that will be necessary, how will they continue to meet the needs of both veterans and businesses, how will training be delivered? How are institutions viewing in-person, virtual, self-paced learning and other methods to ensure veterans gain necessary skills to meet the needs? What new ideas are being explored? How are they adapting? What additional resources and policies are needed?

Recommendation 5: DOL VETS should lead an effort with DOD, VA, Trade Associations, the Services, and the relevant business community to transform the current programming offered to alleviate unemployment to include preparing TSMs for critical roles needed in the economy where the available workforce is understrength.

Rationale: The Department of Labor Veteran Employment and Training Service has an opportunity

to collaborate with the military services and the Department of Defense to build and sustain training and education opportunities and pathways for service members from the military to civilian employment. Importantly, rather than only seeing this as an opportunity to reduce unemployment for transitioning service members (and spouses) this presents an opportunity to assist in building the workforce important to our national competitiveness, including in the Defense Industrial Base (DIB), the National Security Innovation Base (NSIB), and in high-demand areas including computer science, STEM, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, and more.

Preparing Members of the Military and Military Spouses for Civilian Career Opportunities

The Department of Defense offers training and education opportunities for their service members, including tuition assistance, the Community Colleges of the Air Force and the Navy, and additionally trains for roles with equivalents in the civilian community that require certifications and licensure. While the purpose of these training opportunities is to build expertise to be applied in service, the vast majority of service members spend only part of their working lives in service. Most military service members do not understand the relationship between training and education received in military service and workforce opportunities in the national economy, particularly those that, while not directly related to their roles in the military, make use of transferable skills and knowledge. Working with the Department of Labor and with trade associations such as the National Defense Industry Association, the National Association of Manufacturers, and others would allow the DoD and service branches to present information to military members and family members that would help them make informed decisions about training and education and their post-service careers. Importantly, because many military members and family have service to nation as a priority, preparing them for careers in the DIB and NSIB sectors may prove the most expeditious way to meet workforce shortages while meeting the individuals ongoing desire to serve the nation.

As part of the Transition Assistance Program, there are opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and fellowships which could be applied in companies that are part of the DIB and NSIB or related to those sectors. This would have the effect of building knowledge and bridging gaps between corporate America and the military, and perhaps enable more effective contracting, meeting national security goals, and enabling more effective communication between DIB and NSIB companies and the DoD and service branches. These linkages can promote workforce development needs being met.

Making military service members and family members aware of civilian certifications and reciprocity in states that they may be eligible for based on their roles, their education and military training, as well as their internships, apprenticeships, and fellowships could strengthen their participation in the national security workforce. It would also strengthen their ability to contribute to the military and DoD missions, and to increase the return on investment of education and training funds as it builds capacity in the military and the civilian workforce.

Post-service Collaboration with the Department of Education and the Department of Veterans Affairs

With advising and information from the Department of Education and Department of Veteran Affairs veterans and family members could take maximum advantage of education benefits, education counseling, planning education to career transition, internships, work experience, including work study from VA and Department of Education that prepares for workforce entry. In collaboration with companies in the DIB and NSIB, the agencies could prepare transitioned service members and family members for work in high demand, high skill, and high wage sectors of the DIB and NSIB, and build the workforce our national security needs to compete with peer and near-peer strategic competitors. These individuals who have already served our nation know the threat we are facing, and with the right education and training, they will add to the workforce we need.

Right now we do not focus on the needs of the economy, particularly the defense sector and national security sector, and how those needs may be filled by veterans and family members. Focusing on high demand roles and the education necessary to bridge the gap from military service to these occupations will build the ROI on our already completed training and education along with military service and even attainment of security clearances. Familiarity with the ways and means of conducting our national defense prepares them to contribute in the civilian sector. But, we need a focus on this in order for the Department of Education and the Department of Veterans Affairs to successfully help guide transition, education, and career choices if we are to be successful in this effort. The interagency process already existing for TAP is the right place for this collaboration to begin.

The Department of Labor Veteran Employment Training Service Role

With the Department of Labor responsible for TAP, and its goal of minimizing unemployment and the accompanying bill to DoD, the DoL has the incentive to coordinate this effort. It should bridge all stakeholders within DoD, the service branches, and executive agencies with its responsibility to serve our nation's employers through the Workforce Development system. A focus on high demand occupations in the DIB and NSIB sectors would provide ample opportunities for careers and build skills that are later transferable into other high demand occupations that require STEM skills, computer skills, and cyber skills. The experiential education available through DoD authorities may provide key opportunities to NSIB companies they have not previously consider for recruiting high skill veterans with the resources to further upskill through education and training provided by the GI Bill.

America's Job Centers, working with TAP programs and located near military installations and colleges, and in collaboration with college career offices, local education providers, and the business community workforce development resources, provide the glue that could bind these efforts together. Understanding the need, the opportunities for education, the benefits and guidance that facilitate these workforce opportunities, and the ability to collaborate with national associations like NDIA, NAM, Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), and many others, would build the workforce for our defense and national security sectors, strengthen our military, build the perception of opportunity to aid in recruitment, and result in lower unemployment. This is an area for focus with the opportunity to improve our nation's workforce to the benefit of our nation's working veterans and family members.

Recommendation 6: DOL VETS should compile and share best practices and platforms learned as a result of past and current success with apprenticeships, on-the-job training (OJT), online workshops, online learning, and use of virtual technology.

Rationale: Pathways for Transitioning Service Members (TSMs) to their civilian lives and careers can be tumultuous at the best of times. The apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship avenues are ones that tens of thousands of transitioning military service members have used successfully. The current situation dictates less to no face to face time and severely restricts how training under the registered apprenticeship model has been done in the past. Of particular interest is the 'experiment' provided by COVID which has forced the mass use of virtual learning, training, recruiting, meeting, etc. This resource we recommend would capture this great learning and allow it to be leveraged and useful for many TSMs now and in the future

Portions of training that require hands on training have been halted until social distancing requirements and training center reopening process are solidified. Some classroom subjects are being moved to online course participation.

The Department of Labor could assist in this time by doing the following:

- Provide best practices or examples of platforms or companies who are completing online training in successful manner. What are the best learning trends or programs being used?
- Provide guidance to apprenticeships for best proven methods of effort and structure.
- Provide online workshops for these online teaching methods and or processes.
- Identify who is doing this work with higher levels of success and can expose issues and solutions that have been discovered.
- Identify whether there is a potential loss of GI bill benefits should the veteran not be completing tasks under the OJT Model for apprenticeship on the GI Bill.

The opportunity to capture and codify what has been learned over the last year is invaluable. Creating a resource guide or manual of best practices will allow this to be broadly disseminated and even when the world moves back to more in-person learning and training, these best practices will still be valuable for anyone who is remote. OCONUS forces, wounded ill or injured and many others will have more access than ever before and efforts to reduce unemployment and prepare TSMS for critical jobs in the economy will be leveraged by this resource.

Recommendation 7: The Secretary of Labor should support an extension of the WOTC to match the timeline of the GI Bill to benefit protected class veterans who may choose education right after service and in many other ways.

Rationale: Regarding tax credits and protected veteran status many companies only hire within 3 years of separation in the veteran programs they have as they get credit for hiring protected veterans in that time frame. Similarly WOTC also has a timeline for hiring that's relatively shorter or requires unemployment. Both of these ignore that some veterans enter training (including apprenticeships), 2 year education, or 4 year degrees and then fall outside those 3 year limits that companies use based on the status or shorter for WOTC. Is there the potential to toll that time period for the period of use of GI Bill benefits potentially? Easy to coordinate with VA because they know when benefits are used and stopped. At a minimum a study should be conducted to see how the WOTC may be more useful to veterans through the various paths they choose to employment.

Service Delivery

Particularly during the pandemic, the importance of improving access to an array of programs in an integrated fashion is an important part of providing services to veterans. During this unprecedented crisis, veterans and their families may be facing multiple challenges concurrently, and also struggling to find ways to navigate available resources safely and effectively. Accordingly, many of the Service Delivery recommendations are focused on ways to improve integration and awareness between and across programs.

Recommendation 8: VETS should seek to integrate all DOL programs [such as American Job Centers, Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), and the Transition Assistance Program] at the community level.

Rationale: There should be a deliberate effort to increase integration of current and emerging programs at the local level in order to maximize the effectiveness of service, assess for opportunities the veteran may not be aware of, and create efficiencies. These programs are currently fragmented in service and location at the community level.

Recommendation 9: DOL should seek to integrate their community-based programs with other veteran- and family-focused government programs.

Rationale: Integrating the efforts of DOL with those of the Department of Defense, Health and Human Services, Department of Veterans Affairs, and state/local programs provides veteran clients the greatest opportunity to succeed. For example, integrating HVRP with SSVF and HUD/VASH, employment centers, state-administered Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and assistance seeking VA disability compensation could provide an incredible boost to veterans and their families most in need. These programs are not integrated at the customer level; however, each of these programs is complementary and access to them should be better integrated.

Recommendation 10: DOL VETS should consider collaborating with other government agencies (such as Department of Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, etc.) to establish an Ambassador Program that can work in communities with established veteran-serving nonprofits to help recruit clients, spread the word, and promote DOL services for veterans.

Rationale: A formal ambassador program would establish MOUs and quasi-formal relationships to ensure proliferation of resources in the community. This extends DOL's message and reach to veterans at the community level and could assist with integrating government and non-government services to veterans.

PART IV
Appendix

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

Appointed members:

Kayla Williams (Chair)
Center for a New American Security
Recognized Authority (Training)

Jim Lorraine
America's Warrior Partnership
Recognized Authority (Training)

Gary Harter
Utah Department of Veteran Affairs
Recognized Authority (Employment)

Pamela Johnson
Goodwill Industries
Recognized Authority (Rehabilitation)

Keith Natrass
General Motors
Recognized Authority (Business)

Anthony Lowe
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Jeff Hall
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
Veteran Service Organization Representative

James Schmeling
National Defense University Foundation
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Wendi Safstrom
Society for Human Resource Management Representative (Mandated Organization)

M. Eric Eversole
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Representative (Mandated Organization)

Lori Adams
National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) (Mandated Organization)

Stephen Parker
National Governors Association (NGA) (Mandated Organization)

Darrell L. Roberts
Labor Union or Organization Representative (Mandated Organization)

Michael McDermott
Business Roundtable Representative (Mandated Organization)

Ex-officio, Nonvoting Members:

- Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Secretary of Defense
- Director, Office of Personnel Management
- Assistant Secretary of Labor (VETS)
- Assistant Secretary of Labor (ETA)
- Administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration