

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT,
TRAINING, AND EMPLOYER OUTREACH (ACVETEO)
2018 Final Report

December 31, 2018

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Washington, DC 20210

December 31, 2018

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

Secretary Acosta:

On behalf of the members of the Department of Labor Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO), it is our honor to present you with the committee's 2018 report. ACVETEO serves as your subject matter experts in assessing the employment and training needs of our transitioning service members, veterans, and certain eligible dependents, advising you, your subordinate agencies, and Congress on the employment situation of the veterans' community and ways to ensure your Department's programs and services are meeting the needs of today's veterans. Our goal is to ensure that you, your team, and your successors have all the tools that you need to ensure that the Department and its partners can continue to deliver quality service to our veterans.

The attached report contains the committee's recommendations, informed by the expertise of a diverse ACVETEO membership; your team in Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) and other Department of Labor services; government partners to include the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Small Business Administration; as well as other private and public partners with an interest in ensuring our veterans are afforded quality employment opportunities after military service.

Over the past year, our committee has sought to build on our 2017 report, making additional recommendations that focus on three areas of responsibility for the Department of Labor: (1) barriers to employment for veterans; (2) transition and training resources; and (3) direct services for veterans and employers. The ACVETEO members believe that not only will our recommendations serve to ensure continued innovation in the delivery of programs and services to veterans, but we also believe that our report can help serve as a road map for the new Administration.

We are privileged to serve on the ACVETEO and we thank you and your team at VETS for not only their dedication to helping this committee execute its responsibilities, but also working proactively to implement our past recommendations to consistently improve the programs and services available to our veterans. On behalf of the Committee, thank you for your commitment to veterans and their families. We look forward to your feedback on this report and continuing our work in 2019.

Sincerely,



M. Eric Eversole
Chair, Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach
Vice President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce (Mandated Organization)
President, Hiring Our Heroes Program

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 15 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 Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, Small Business Administration 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, integration into the workforce, among others, and assisting the ASVET 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 2018 report of ACVETEO provides 11 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. To build on past iterations of ACVETEO, this year's report focused on three specific areas under the purview of the Department of Labor (DOL):

- Barriers to Employment
- Transition Assistance and Training Support
- Direct Services

Our goal this year was to build on last year's recommendations, while working to identify ongoing and persistent challenges within the veterans' community to securing meaningful post-military employment. This year's report once again focuses on improving outreach materials, the functionality of online resources, improved coordination among federal, state, and private resources, as well as exploring ways to leverage virtual employment opportunities to better serve veterans and military-connected families. DOL has proven very responsive over the past year in tackling this committee's recommendations. For continuity, we have included an update on the execution of 2017's recommendations in this report as well.

Our report has four main parts including: (1) this executive summary; (2) a review of the recommendations from 2016 and 2017 and any action taken of those recommendations; (3) a summary of our 2018 recommendations; and (4) a review of the 2018 recommendations and our supporting rationale for those recommendations. We look forward to continuing our important work together on behalf of our veterans and their families.

PART II

2016 Recommendation Review

Barriers to Employment

Recommendation 1. The Department of Labor (DOL) should expand its outreach and education of those eligible for priority of services to include active duty and reserve military spouses to address the staggering disparity in unemployment rates.

- a. Earlier in 2018, DOL met with the Employer Support for Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Communications Team and identified opportunities for collaborating communications messaging to the reserve/guard community. In an on-going effort to expand its outreach, DOL is currently working with the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Steering Groups to develop Moments that Matter communications campaign and identify opportunities to directly engage with transitioning service members and spouses, before transition.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 2. DOL should take action to expand the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program outreach/facilitation to include outreach 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.

- a. DOL has incorporated JVSG program information in Veterans' Employment and Training Service's (VETS) blog posts, social media postings, and VETS' eNewsletter to more than 60,000 subscribers into VETS' 2018 Communications Plan. Social media postings include DOL's social media handle, which has more than 400,000 followers.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 3. DOL should research opportunities to implement a methodology to identify and share lessons learned and effective practices between American Job Centers (AJCs) with consideration to women veterans, veterans with disabilities, and Native American veterans.

- a. VETS collects success stories on its programs, to include women veterans, veterans with disabilities, and Native American veterans. Success stories are shared through VETS and DOL's mechanisms of outreach.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 4. The Department should re-evaluate its definition of special veteran populations annually to ensure that the designation encompasses all appropriate veteran populations.

- a. This recommendation has been refined as Recommendation 4 under 2017. This recommendation should be closed for 2016.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Transition Assistance & Training Support

Recommendation 5. DOL should continue to ensure Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), employers, and other stakeholders to participate in DOL's Employment Workshop (DOLEW) curriculum review scheduled for FY 2017.

- a. In FY 17 & FY 18, VETS completed the curriculum review as noted. Both the DOLEW and Career Technical Training Track (CTTT) (now known as Careers, Exploration, and Planning Track (CEPT)) curricula were revised.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 6. VSOs and non-governmental 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.

- a. In FY 17 & FY 18, VETS completed the curriculum review as noted. Both the DOLEW and CTTT (now known as CEPT) curricula were revised. The final name change was Career Exploration and Planning Track (CEPT).

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 7. DOL should, in collaboration with its partner agencies makes recommendations on the functionality of a "TAP APP."

- a. VETS, in collaboration with the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), has begun working on the development of the TAP mobile app through ETA's CareerOneStop cooperative agreement. A Statement of Work has been created and the funds obligated. The TAP mobile app will transitioning service members and their families. The app will provide the option for service members and veterans to receive text notifications and reminders. VETS will provide more detailed milestones as the development process moves forward.

ACVETEO: Recommend modification to include all parts of TAP (DoD, VA, etc.).

Recommendation 8. The Department in collaboration with the Small Business Administration (SBA) should investigate ways to improve how information is provided to small business about federal and state funding programs to include tax incentives available for them when they hire veterans.

- a. SBA's Boots to Business (B2B) program serves as the Entrepreneurship Track of the Department of Defense's (DoD) Veterans TAP, which has three tracks for military members and their families: higher education, career technical training, and entrepreneurship. As part of the TAP, the B2B curriculum is currently undergoing comprehensive review with implementation of revised curriculum expected in early 2018. The revised B2B curriculum will include information on American Job Centers. In FY 2017, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) invited SBA to provide entrepreneurship training program information.

ACVETEO: The intention of Recommendation 9 was to ensure that information was being delivered to small businesses. Recommend modification.

Direct Services

Recommendation 9. DOL's ETA and VETS should jointly explore and pursue staff skills training for the non-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.

- a. VETS released a policy notice on October 11, 2017 announcing the availability of training for non-JVSG staff. In addition, the NVTI vendor presented at the NASWA conference in August 2017, again in September 2017, and at the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans conference in May 2018, informing them of the opportunity for qualified applicants to attend NVTI classes.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

Recommendation 10. 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 Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) job listing obligations, as well as facilitating and leading DOL's and other federal agencies' in positive outreach to the federal contractor community.

- a. On September 24, 2013, DOL's Office of Federal Contractor Compliance Program (OFCCP) published a Final Rule revising the regulations implementing VEVRAA. The regulations became effective on March 24, 2014. As revised, the regulations strengthen the affirmative action provisions of the regulations to aid contractors in their efforts to recruit and hire protected veterans and improve job opportunities for protected veterans.

The regulations require that contractors establish annual hiring benchmarks for protected veterans, require the use of specific language be used when incorporating the equal opportunity clause into a subcontract, and provide job listing information, in a manner and format permitted by the appropriate State or local job service, so that it can access and use the information to make the job listings available to job seekers.

State workforce personnel are aware of the VEVRAA regulations and are connected with federal contractors through their local National Industry Liaison Group (NILG), which hosts quarterly conferences. On September 21, 2018, DOL's OFCCP signed a Memorandum of Understanding between OFCCP and NILG that will help to further greater engagement and dialog with the contractor community, and lead to greater transparency, more effective compliance assistance, and ultimately more comprehensive compliance by contractors with equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination obligations.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

Recommendation 11. Improve veterans' employment outcomes by increasing the number of job opportunities available to veterans and eligible spouses on state job banks and DOL's www.veterans.gov.

- a. Veterans.gov utilizes the National Labor Exchange (NLx). The NLx partnership collects and distributes job openings exclusively found on corporate career websites and state job banks. All job openings are unduplicated, currently available, and from vetted employers. In 2017, the NLx made available well over 15 million unduplicated job openings, from tens of thousands of employers of all sizes. Additionally, the NLX web portal was relaunched with a redesigned look, feel, and capabilities. VETS has incorporated these changes into www.veterans.gov in 2018.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

2017 Recommendation Review

Barriers to Employment

Recommendation 1. The Department of Labor should consider the means and mechanisms through which it could provide specific and purposeful training to field personnel, positioned to support enhanced understanding of the in- and post-service experience of veterans with disabilities and Native American veterans.

- a. On March 5, 2018, VETS released a policy letter announcing the redesigned JVSG required courses. VETS will continually monitor and refresh curriculum on a standard schedule and identify new courses that meet the employment needs of veterans. The Department of Labor should consider the means and mechanisms through which it could provide specific and purposeful resources on the DOL website for employers to support understanding of the post-service experience of women veterans, veterans with disabilities and Native American veterans.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

Recommendation 2. DOL should consider the means and mechanisms through which it could provide specific and purposeful resources on the DOL website for employers to support understanding of the post-service experience of women veterans, veterans with disabilities and Native American veterans.

- a. VETS has updated its web content for women veterans on www.dol.gov/vets and on www.veterans.gov. Information for veterans with disabilities is available on www.dol.gov/vets and we are leveraging ODEP's resources including their newly updated Job Accommodation Network (JAN) website and the Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN). JAN is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues for all Americans, including veterans. EARN helps employers recruit, hire, retain and advance people with disabilities. VETS will consider opportunities to make additional information available for Native American veterans.

VETS submitted a draft proposal for a single portal on veterans' employment and is working with the lab at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to research veterans' employment and how veterans are utilizing federal online portals, like www.vets.gov and www.veterans.gov. VETS expects OPM to conclude their research in FY 19. After the research is concluded, VETS will determine what changes should be made on www.veterans.gov and will propose these changes for FY 2020. These changes could include additional information being made available for women veterans, veterans with disabilities, and Native American veterans.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

Recommendation 3. In 2016, ACVETEO recommended that the department research opportunities to identify and share lessons learned and effective practices between centers. DOL VETS should implement its strategy to share lessons learned and effective practices among American Job Centers.

- a. VETS designed a portal on the www.NVTI.org website to give current and former students the ability to form communities around topics of mutual interests. This collaborative work space allows participants to interact with DOL VETS staff as well.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 4. VETS should undertake a thorough but expedient review of the current list and definitions of “Significant Barriers to Employment” (SBEs) governing the JVSG program to consider expanding SBEs and/or having additional target populations as defined by the Secretary.

- a. VETS is reviewing current SBEs and program outcomes as well as the capacity of JVSG – funded staff to serve additional veterans at current funding levels.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

Transition Assistance & Training Support

Recommendation 5. Department of Labor should continue to ensure Veteran Service Organizations, employers, and other stakeholders to participate in DOL’s Employment Workshop and Career Credentialing and Apprenticeship Track (CCAT) technical review scheduled for Fiscal Year 2018.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

Recommendation 6. Department of Labor should increase outreach efforts to engage businesses and stakeholders on advancing apprenticeship opportunities for Veterans.

- a. VETS has focused employer outreach efforts to support the President’s Executive Order on Expanding Apprenticeships. The VETS’ Employer Outreach Team has referred 130 employers to ETA’s Office of Apprenticeship since October 1, 2017. In addition, VETS provides funding to states to support 500+ Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs). VETS funded training for LVERs includes information to assist employers in developing apprenticeships.

In August 2018, ETA announced the launch of a new digital platform, www.Apprenticeship.gov. The innovative web portal features an Apprenticeship Finder tool that offers career seekers a platform to search for apprenticeships by city, state, and occupation, as well as connects job seekers to high-skilled, high-paying careers.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 7. Department of Labor should increase outreach and services for military spouses.

- a. VETS continues to increase its outreach to military spouses and to employers looking to hire military spouses. VETS has added a military spouse subscriber list on www.veterans.gov, which currently has more than 10,000 subscribers. VETS has also developed an online portal for military spouses on www.veterans.gov that launched in June 2018 to provide information on employment resources by state, and by licensing occupation or by license. In FY 19, VETS plans to launch information on inter-state compact agreements to further raise awareness and offer resources pertaining to licensing and credentialing portability for military spouses.

VETS is working with DOL Women’s Bureau to develop Transition Assistance Program (TAP) curriculum specific to military spouses. VETS is focusing on employer outreach efforts to support the Presidents' Executive Order on Expanding Apprenticeships to both veterans and military spouses. VETS continues to improve employment resources available at VETERANS.GOV to ensure the content meets the needs of transitioning Service members, veterans, military spouses, employers, and stakeholders.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 8. As the single federal portal for Veteran employment, Department of Labor should continue to refine and improve VETERANS.GOV and should work with Veterans Affairs to resolve

duplicative employment information on Vets.gov.

- a. VETS continues to work with the VA to ensure that DOL is recognized as the sole source of employment information within the Federal government. The VA is standing down the Veteran Employment Center (VEC) portal and VETS is continuing to improve upon www.veterans.gov. VETS is also working with OPM to look at the customer experience for veteran employment. VETS has also proposed to start enhancing www.veterans.gov in FY 20.

In 2018, VETS developed and launched a latest numbers page, a one-page resource for data and information on veterans' unemployment numbers. After launching, the VA pointed subscribers to our unemployment information page, an effort that helped the VA discontinue sending their own numbers release each month. VETS will continue to improve employment resources on DOL's veterans.gov to ensure the content meets the needs of transitioning service members, veterans, military spouses, employers, and stakeholders.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Direct Services

Recommendation 9. VETS should work with the DOL Office of Apprenticeship, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the National Association of State Approving Agencies to improve the benefit-delivery process for veterans receiving GI bill benefits to participate in a registered apprenticeship program. The current method is cumbersome and costly to veterans utilizing GI benefits as supplemental income.

- a. The Veterans Apprenticeship and Labor Opportunity Reform Act of the VALOR Act was signed into law on November 15, 2017. Consistent with the committee's recommendations, this reduces the overall paperwork burden of multi-state apprenticeship programs to be certified to provide eligible veterans with the GI Bill benefits they've earned.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 10. DOL should encourage HIRE Vets Medallion Program participants to demonstrate interaction with the federal workforce system, such as listing job opportunities in the National Labor Exchange.

- a. HVMP recipients that post their job opportunities on the National Labor Exchange will be identified on the system. HVMP has encouraged the use of federal and state workforce systems along with other programs and systems that facilitate veteran employment through the publication of a final rule. The HVMP will highlight aggregate models of excellence that meet the hiring, retention, and veteran integration assistance criteria of the award to encourage employers nationwide to move forward in these areas. Successful interaction with the federal and state workforce system is expected to be one of these models. Outside of the HVMP, VETS Regional Veteran Employment Coordinators and DOL-funded Local Veteran Employment Representatives work with employers to connect them with the workforce system when looking to hire veterans.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 11. DOL should strategically leverage internal and external federal resources to properly equip transitioning service members, veterans, and eligible dependents with the all of the information they need to succeed in the civilian marketplace. This means that business lines like OFCCP, ETA, ODEP and others require sufficient funding to sustain their shared mission to promote veteran success in the workforce.

- a. VETS recognizes that a number of DOL agencies support transitioning service members,

veterans, and eligible dependents. VETS currently leverages DOL programs and priority of service for veterans in ETA such as apprenticeships, dislocated worker programs, and Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA). Additionally, VETS promotes ODEP's JAN and EARN programs, WHD's Military Family Leave Act, and EBSA's work on financial literacy for service members. Finally, we partner with many federal partners on veteran employment issues and continue to highlight their resources and programs on www.veterans.gov.

ACVETEO: Recommend Closure.

Recommendation 12. VETS and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) should work toward promoting virtual job opportunities for military spouses to promote quality career opportunities and growth.

- a. VETS has increased its outreach and partnerships to serve the employment needs of military spouses. Recently, VETS partnered with DoD's Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) program and is supporting the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes' Spouse Employment Events nationwide in Calendar Year 2018. VETS has also worked with the White House on military spouse hiring initiatives. In 2018, VETS launched the military spouses portal at the White House and will continue to work with DoD, and DOL's ETA and Women's Bureau, to continue shaping our military spouses portal on www.veterans.gov and our outreach efforts.

ACVETEO: Keep Open.

PART III

Summary of 2018 Recommendations

Barriers to Employment

1. The Department of Labor should add Vietnam Veterans as a ‘Special Population’ under the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) Program.
2. Congress should add ‘military spouses who are unemployed after relocating to a new duty station or separating from military service’ as a ‘Covered Person’ under JVSG, 38 U.S. Code 4215(a)(1)(B) to better assist military spouses in obtaining employment.
3. DOL should track military spouses through transition services using flexible tracks.

Transition Assistance & Training Support

4. DOL should continue to improve and market existing resources for veterans that highlight careers by occupational fields based on earning potential, projected job growth, and ease of entry.
5. DOL should research and determine the need for network and communication tools and opportunities for military/veteran spouses as it pertains to employment.
6. DOL should develop the systemic capability to track and report on warm handovers of transitioning service members from DoD to DOL.
7. DOL should have access to the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) with the ability to match databases and evaluate outcomes.

Direct Services

8. VETS should create a campaign on Employer Outreach, specifically utilizing the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) funded positions to educate and inform employers on the advantages of hiring veterans and military spouses. They should also increase awareness and education on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).
9. DOL should increase employer outreach and promotion of Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) to help employers fully understand how to best serve employees with disabilities.
10. Office of Transition and Economic Development (OTED) should collaborate with DOL and DOD to standardize the look, feel and functionality of all resource platforms to reduce confusion and enhance the customer experience.
11. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and National Veteran Training Institute (NVTI) should integrate how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is used by Human Resources in the talent acquisition process, into their curriculums.

Recommendations and Rationales by Specific Areas: Barriers to Employment, Transition Assistance & Training Support, and Direct Services

Barriers to Employment

As both demonstrated in practice and informed by research, there is a clear danger with regard to failing to acknowledge inherent differences between the service-connected (and non-service-connected) experiences represented by different cohorts of the veterans' community; that is, specifically how those experiences might differently impact the process of transitioning from military to civilian life, and subsequent post-service employment. Put differently, it is the opinion of the committee that broad and sweeping generalizations with regard to the economic and employment concerns of the population—and strategies to impact those concerns—are inappropriate and limiting. To that end, the committee makes the following recommendations related to advancing insight—and ultimately advancing impactful service-delivery—in support of the employment situation of veterans with disabilities, women veterans, Native American veterans and other veterans, reservists and military spouses with barriers to employment.

Recommendation 1. The Department of Labor should add Vietnam Veterans as a 'Special Population' under the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) Program.

Recommendation Rationale: Vietnam Era veterans, both disabled and non-disabled, are still participating in the workforce, though many of them face significant employment challenges. There were approximately 362,000 unemployed veterans in 2017, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Veterans Affairs indicated that there were approximately 64,000 unemployed veterans of the Vietnam era actively seeking employment. Employment can play a major role in overall wellbeing. Title 28, U.S. Code §4103A allows the Secretary of Labor to identify additional groups of veterans who are entitled to receive intensive services from appropriate JVSG-specific staff.

Recommendation 2. Congress should add 'military spouses who are unemployed after relocating to a new duty station or separating from military service' as a 'Covered Person' under JVSG, 38 U.S. Code 4215(a)(1)(B) to better assist military spouses in obtaining employment.

Recommendation Rationale: It is estimated that unemployment for military spouses stands at 23 percent according to a survey conducted by the DoD. Studies indicate military spouses face their greatest barrier to employment not necessarily when a service member is transitioning out of the military, but when the service member relocates to a new duty station. According to the DoD's Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO), the two most pressing concerns effecting military retention are operational tempo, and spouse employment opportunities. Granting unemployed military spouses access to services from Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists places them within a network that is familiar with the hardships of the military community, as well as grants them eligibility and priority of service from services available through the American Job Center (AJC).

Recommendation 3. DOL should track military spouses through transition services using flexible tracks.

Recommendation Rationale: Very few military spouses attend the transition services because they can only attend on a space-available basis and that the curriculum is focused on transitioning service members, not spouses. The week-long Transition Assistance Program (TAP) does not offer the flexibility many military spouses would need, such as child-care services and virtual options. Currently, military spouses can attend the TAP but, few do because attendance is on a space-available basis and the curriculum is focused on transitioning service members, not the needs of

spouses. A military spouse focused transition course would provide the opportunity to educate military spouses on Licensing and Credentialing portability and apprenticeship opportunities.¹

Transition Assistance & Training Support

With record low numbers of unemployment for our nation's veterans, continued focus on improving our nation's transition assistance and training support is essential to staying ahead of any issues that may arise. ACVETEO is appreciative of DOL VETS efforts the last three years in ensuring VSOs and other stakeholders' participation in the curriculum review process. It remains essential that stakeholders' participation be continued in DOL's Employment Workshop as well as other Transition GPS modules and optional curriculum training tracks to include the Career Technical Training Track.

Continued and improved focus on the military spouses is viewed as beneficial to military families and our nation overall. The military spouse employability needs to be viewed as high priority and treated as such. ACVETEO believes an electronic data system would be useful in tracking participation, access, progress, and the overall warm handover from DoD to DOL's American Job Centers (AJCs), for those service members who have not met the Career Readiness Standard (CRS). This database may be utilized by other federal agencies to improve, adapt, or change the information shared with service members. ACVETEO's goal for transitioning service members is to view TAP as a high quality, engaging, and relevant experience, which leads to opportunities in the civilian sector.

ACVETEO has made the following recommendations and supporting rationales to improve transition resources, services, and opportunities for veterans and military spouses to facilitate meaningful employment and careers.

Recommendation 4. DOL should continue to improve and market existing resources for veterans that highlight careers by occupational fields based on earning potential, projected job growth, and ease of entry.

Recommendation Rationale: To address underemployment of veterans and improve retention of recently transitioned service members, DOL could develop a resource that helps guide the veteran in pursuing a career that has greater earning potential and employment opportunity. ONet may be able to serve as this resource if all of the career fields were included.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has great information on their website that can assist people in the process of finding high-demand jobs.

There are three additional 2-day tracks available through TAP - CEPT (Career Exploration and Planning Track), Boots to Business Track, and Accessing Higher Education Track. These should be shared. Additionally, the TAP slides are all available and that may be an excellent resource to link to from the DOL VETS site.

¹ Department of Defense. 2015 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community. Pg. 126. Accessed October 2018 from: <http://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2015-Demographics-Report.pdf>.

Recommendation 5. DOL should research and determine the need for network and communication tools and opportunities for military/veteran spouses as it pertains to employment.

Recommendation Rationale: DOL may find a need to create a communication area for military and veteran spouses. Information highlighting companies dedicated to helping those spouses would be a valuable resource at this location. It would be valuable for spouses to have the opportunity to network with other spouses about the job market when a permanent change of assignment or separation from the service is approaching. The community of interest could share material and information on employment, as well as licensing and credentialing.

DOL provided an excellent resource when they released the spouse portal early in 2018. The Veterans.gov website is another valuable resource that the department should aggressively market. It would be helpful if this website included information to highlight state-specific employment and training incentives for service members, veterans, and their spouse.

Recommendation 6. DOL should develop the systemic capability to track and report on warm handovers of transitioning service members from DoD to DOL.

Recommendation Rationale: Transitioning service members not meeting employment related Career Readiness Standards (CRS) are given a warm handover to the AJC system. DOL, at present, does not have the systemic capability to track those warm handovers and report back to DoD the outcome of the referral due to limited technology communication between the two systems.

Recommendation 7. DOL should have access to the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) with the ability to match databases and evaluate outcomes.

Recommendation Rationale: In order to better track the outcomes and effectiveness of TAP, it is imperative that DOL have access to the NDNH. The Office of Child Support Enforcement is the agency that has this data.

Direct Services

Recommendation 8. VETS should create a campaign on Employer Outreach, specifically utilizing the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) funded positions, to educate and inform employers on the advantages of hiring veterans and military spouses. They should also increase awareness and education on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA).

Recommendation Rationale: There should be a deliberate effort to increase awareness amongst potential employers on the number of veterans available for employment in the community. They also should be educated on the advantages of hiring veterans and military spouses, which not only include acquiring a highly skilled and qualified person, but also could have business tax advantages.

By increasing employer outreach and education on USERRA, this will empower them to be better stewards of their veteran workforce. Earlier connections equate to a better understanding and support of the program by employers. Adding USERRA as a required subject in the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP), Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) and Leadership training curriculums will maximize the effort to better educate both employers and employees on the benefits of the program. The full-time trained DVOP and LVER employees will be a valued addition to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) cadre of volunteers.

Recommendation 9. DOL should increase employer outreach and promotion of Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

Recommendation Rationale: ODEP can provide guidance and resources to employers in a non-confrontational manner so that they fully understand their obligations under the law, and how to best serve employees with disabilities. Highlighting programs such as Job Accommodation Network (JAN), will provide employers with resources that will reduce barriers to employment.

Recommendation 10. Office of Transition and Economic Development (OTED) should collaborate with DOL and VA to standardize the look, feel and functionality of platforms.

Recommendation Rationale: Veterans navigating for programs and services are the same audience (VA or DOL), but there is cognitive dissonance in how these resources are delivered. With the creation of the OTED, there is a unique opportunity to collaborate across agencies, which will ultimately enhance the experience for the customer. It is important for the Federal Agencies to work together and provide cross-agency solutions that provide maximum efficiencies and benefits to veterans and their families.

Recommendation 11. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and National Veteran Training Institute (NVTI) should integrate into their curriculums, how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is used by Human Resources in the talent acquisition process, to include resume filtering and employment assistance programs.

Recommendation Rationale: Human Resource offices are increasingly utilizing AI in their talent acquisition process. Transitioning service members and veterans must be educated on how AI filtering is being used, which will allow them to tailor their resumes accordingly. Further briefings from DOL needed on how AI is being considered in its employment assistance programs.

PART IV

Appendix

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

Appointed members:

J. Michael Haynie, Ph.D.

Barnes Professor of Entrepreneurship, Whitman School of Management Syracuse University
Recognized Authority (Business)

Lois A. Bethards

Executive Director, American Indian Center of Arkansas
Recognized Authority (Business)

Jon Jukuri

National Conference of State Legislatures
Recognized Authority (Business)

Tracy St. Benoit

Researcher and High Risk Ethnographer, University of Florida
Recognized Authority (Rehabilitation)

Joylin Kirk (Vice Chair)

Senior Director of Mission Services, Goodwill Industries International
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Nichole Coleman

Executive Director, County Veterans Service Officer
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Richard M. Jones

Member, American Legion, Senior Vice President, CBS Corporation
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Ryan Gallucci (Chair)

Deputy Director of Veterans Service, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Veteran Service Organization Representative

Henry G. Jackson

President & CEO, Society for Human Resource Management Representative (Mandated Organization)

M. Eric Eversole

Vice President and Executive Director, Hiring Our Heroes Program
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Representative (Mandated Organization)

Pam Gerassimides

NLX Director & Assistant Executive Director
National Association of State Workforce Agencies Representative (Mandated Organization)

Stephen Parker
Deputy Director, Policy Office of Federal Relations
National Governors Association Representative (Mandated Organization)

Shirley Quarles
Recognized Authority (Business)

Darrell L. Roberts
Executive Director, Helmets to Hardhats
Labor Union or Organization Representative (Mandated Organization)

Ross Brown
JPMorgan Chase
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