



Veteran Support Sponsorship

MISSION

As veterans transition, they are routinely taught how to look for jobs, but lack training to prevent their attitudes and performance from deteriorating due to the lack of jobs, longer-term unemployment, and the invisible wounds of war. This *preparedness gap* is a causal factor to why veterans become discouraged, end their search for work prematurely, experience higher rates of unemployment than civilians, and this contributes to epidemic levels of homelessness and suicides. This crisis is about to worsen. One million veterans are currently enrolled in colleges and this number is predicted to rise dramatically in 2015 due to military shrinkage and troop draw downs.

Searching for a solution, veterans in Texas and Michigan learned about improved training implemented in 2011 by the Illinois Dept. of Employment Security. Rather than teach people how to look for jobs, *Jobseeker Success Mindset Training (JSMT)* was created to strengthen the mental fitness of job hunters to persevere and perform well despite their challenges - improving their likeability and reducing unemployment. The course creator, Jeff Garton, was invited to deliver JSMT workshops at Fort Bliss. Subsequently, veterans with Vetpower.org, a 501c3, obtained funding and participated in customizing that training exclusively to veterans. Finalized in December of 2013, the new *Veteran Empowerment Training (V.E.T.)* blends online learning, reinforcement workshops, and peer mentoring to ease transition and improve mental fitness for employment challenges in the new economy.

After learning about V.E.T., the American Council on Education (ACE) invited Garton to attend a student veteran summit in Washington D.C. Participants included veterans, college staff, representatives from DOD, DOL, and military friendly employers. Colonel Duane Hardesty, now an executive with Northrop Grumman said, "*V.E.T. is the best program I've seen in the 9.5 years I've been working with transitioning warriors.*"

MISSION: Engage sponsoring employers in supplying colleges with V.E.T. resources for distribution to student veterans and spouses.

- Veterans prefer employer sponsored programs and the distribution of V.E.T. on college campuses by military friendly employers simultaneously helps to connect military communities with Corporate America and jobs.
- Sponsoring employers will be equipping colleges with innovative resources many of them don't have to help veterans deal with transition issues, and because V.E.T. improves performance, training is beneficial to employers.
- Sponsoring employers will also be providing *Student Veterans of America (SVA)* chapter members with training and formal resources that will enhance their peer mentoring and outreach to jobless alumni.
- Because V.E.T. is delivered on demand, this makes essential training conveniently accessible to the enormous and rapidly expanding population of student veterans, many of whom are enrolled in distance learning with their colleges.
- Important to student veterans, V.E.T. was created with the help of their brother and sister veterans, and may qualify them for ACE college credit.

V.E.T. virtual classrooms are branded with the logos of sponsoring employers and loaded with information sponsors wish to provide their potential customers and recruits. Links to access the classrooms are installed on the websites of the sponsor, their target colleges, and participating Student Veterans of America chapters. One enrollment applies to both the veteran and spouse and lasts their entire time in college, providing sponsors with requested data about their enrollees and a long-term opportunity to connect with military communities - benefiting even the veterans they cannot hire. V.E.T. trainers and campus partners do the work and ensure sponsors are recognized and appreciated for what will become a best practice in education and services to military families.