

| 2017-2018



The Veterans Enterprise Training & Services Group **A Nonprofit Community Based Organization**

Our **Mission:** To provide a holistic network of support and programs for Veterans, their families, and the community wherein participants will **Achieve Economic Empowerment through Education, Entrepreneurship, and Employment.**

Program Overview

**IT TRAINING | ENTREPRENEURSHIP | SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT |
FINANCIAL LITERACY | CORPORATE TRAINING | FEDERAL PROCUREMENT**

The VETS Group was formed as a nonprofit 501(c)3, community based organization in 2004 and has strong roots in Washington, D.C. and the Greater Washington Metro Area. All programs and services are offered to people with disabilities, women, minorities, persons of limited means – homeless, formerly incarcerated, unemployed, under-employed, and dislocated workers.

The VETS Group specializes in IT Training, but also offer a variety of additional training programming to insure our participants' success, such as Financial Literacy, which includes: Credit Repair and Identity Theft. We offer Entrepreneurial Training and Small Business Development, as well as, Corporate Specific Designed Training. We are currently in negotiations to implement an initiative to identify more employment and procurement opportunities in the Airport industry.

We have formed partnerships with the Veterans Administration, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Labor, Local Workforce Development Agencies and many large corporate enterprises to identify employment opportunities, business education, mentoring, technical assistance, growth capital, and access to international markets.

**The VETS GROUP Incorporated | 1200 18th Street, NW Suites LL-100 |
Washington, DC 20036 | 202-822-0011 | www.vetsgroup.org | Like us on
Facebook [facebook.com/thevetsgroup](https://www.facebook.com/thevetsgroup) | Follow us on Twitter @VetsGroup**

VETS GROUP ACADEMY OVERVIEW:

The **VETS Group Training Academy** is a Qualified Information Technology Training Provider that specializes in IT training for: (1) Microsoft Office & Windows Operating Systems; (2) CompTIA Computer, Network and Security Certifications; (3) Cisco Network Technicians and Administrators (CCNA); (4) Cyber Security and Certified Ethical Hacking; and (5) Cell Tower Maintenance.

New courses are being offered this year to include: Computer Network Cabling, Website Development, and Project Management. The Vets Group's training facility is recognized as a Certified Cisco Academy, a CompTIA Industry Partner, and approved by the DC Education Licensure Commission and the Maryland Department of Higher Education.

Our **Kids R Coding Summer Program** helps younger students with their futures in STEM with over 20 cutting-edge courses. From coding and game development to robotics and design, they build in-demand skills and innovate like pros with industry-standard tech tools.



PAST PERFORMANCE

Through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration, the Vets Group entered into a partnership with the **Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA)**, to design and implement a pre-apprenticeship training program that prepared participants for employment opportunities as Metro Bus Mechanics and other positions within Metro. Nearly 100 participants successfully completed the program over an 18-month period.

Additionally, the VETS Group has provided certification based training through partnerships with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), and the Maryland Workforce Development Centers. We presently serve as an Eligible Training Provider for the American Jobs Centers (AJCs) in both the District and Maryland. Since our initial approval in 2015, 144 students enrolled in our IT courses with an 87% retention rate; 118 or 80% are still employed after 3 to 6 months; and 64 obtained one or more industry recognized certifications. Of the students enrolled 83 or 56% were veterans.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR THE TARGETED POPULATION

Our ongoing mission is to provide educational resources and nationally-recognized certification courses that will prepare and assist the program participants that are in need with training that will qualify them for employment opportunities in high demand occupations in the IT Industry. We also provide mentorship as needed to create positive productive processes and outcomes for their success.

For the specific population of students 18 years of age and older, we realize a need for support and a welcoming, personalized approach to transitioning individuals to employment, so we design small classes, an open-door policy, and a mission-driven staff. Most of our staff have worked with DC community programs, and are positioned to recognize common roadblocks, and welcome individuals who are seeking help but who are still unsure about their capacity to follow through to graduation.

Throughout this process, the VETS Group coordinates with DOES employment specialists, employers and employees to support the student's transition into the workplace and to continue to educate employers about simple accommodations that may make these new employees more productive.

The targeted occupations include those for which H-1B visas have been certified. Such occupations will include: Help Desk Support Technician, Computer Specialist, Network Operations Center Analyst, Network Technician and Cyber Security Analyst.

PROGRAMS:

Entrepreneurial Program

The VETS Group offers training in Federal Procurement; Small Business Development; Financial Literacy, Credit Repair and Identity Theft and is now in the process of implementing an initiative to identify more employment and procurement opportunities in the Airport industry. We have been doing Entrepreneurial training for almost 14 years and continue to work with our entrepreneurs by providing them an extension of services that help them continue to maintain their businesses. These ongoing services are mentorships, business partnerships, and procurement events that introduce participants to business opportunities for their continued success. These procurement events are in conjunction with the Veterans' Entrepreneurship Task Force (VET-Force), which the President, Joe Wynn is an active member and has been board member since 1998. Our organization helps the VET-Force in the coordination of joint procurement events at the local and federal levels in DC, MD, and VA.

The VETS Group has formed partnerships with the Veterans Administration, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Labor, Local Workforce Development Agencies and many large corporate enterprises to identify employment opportunities, business education, mentoring, technical assistance, growth capital, and access to international markets.

For entrepreneurs that need extensive training we offer a 10-Point Series of Workshops and Seminars to help them succeed. These Workshops and Seminar Series' are instructed by leaders in industry and are designed to help participants get a jump start on success. This program will guide them through the process with activities from business plan writing, financial literacy, marketing and advertising development.

Financial Literacy Program

The goal of our Financial Literacy Program is to help participants improve their understanding of financial concepts and services, so they are empowered to make informed choices and act to improve their financial well-being. We have two different tracks for the Financial Literacy Program: 1) specifically for individuals and families to help them gain adequate knowledge to properly make decisions pertaining to certain personal finance areas like real estate, insurance, investing, saving (especially for college), tax planning and retirement, and 2) specifically for small business owners and entrepreneurs to provide them with basic information and tools in financial management, taxes, liability insurance, banking, wages, and other resources related to being self-employed.

Kids R Coding Summer Program

Because technology dominates our lives, learning basic computer programming is a smart idea, and an essential skill our children need today, so we have developed this summer program to introduce the younger generation to skills that will help them in their future.

They will learn binary coding and how to build simple websites and games helping them refine their design, logic, and problem-solving abilities. It also allows them to express ideas and creativity in unique ways. We will use many FREE websites that teach children how to play around with code, along with some that have fees, but all are interesting and bring a summer of fun as they design and learn all in one. We are members of Hour of Coding, Tynker Platform, and GoogleKids.

VOCATIONAL SERVICES

Case management, mentoring, and coordination of employment services by our staff and its organizational partners are major activities and critical to supporting enrollees from their first visit to the facility through employment; and for some, even after they are employed.

We recognize the need to meet participants wherever they are in their transition toward a stable productive life style and we understand that barriers to employment such as health and/or substance abuse issues, family stressors, loneliness, intermittent homelessness, lack of transportation, and access to a computer, can stop them in their tracks. We help participants with access to computers, referrals to other organizations, churches, and government resources for housing, food, childcare and transportation. Some participants need help with learning good study habits; the proper protocols of life in an office; knowing how to dress; and even properly communicating with others in the office environment. The services we provide that cover these objectives are:

- Mentoring, Counseling, Case Management
- Job Readiness Assistance (i.e., resume writing, interviewing skills)
- Job Placement and Referral Services
- Job Coaching (Employment Follow-up and Tracking)

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS

The VETS Group is an executive member organization of the Veterans Entrepreneurship Task Force (VET-Force), which is made up of Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) and hundreds of veteran owned businesses from across the nation. Many of these businesses operate in the IT Industry and are located in the Washington Metro Area. They provide employment opportunities for participants that successfully complete our programs. Some of our employer partners are listed below:

1. TriOrb Solutions c/o Joseph Hall, CEO, St. Petersburg, FL (727) 490-9594
2. Civility Management Solutions c/o Laurie Artis, CEO, Hyattsville, MD (301) 352-7875
3. BNL, Inc. c/o Paul Ignosh, Director, Herndon, Va. (703) 787-0752
4. Buckner Mgmt & Technology c/o Tonya Buckner, CEO, Bowie, MD (202) 815-3683
5. SiTech Consulting c/o Kevin Coby, CEO, Annapolis Junction, MD (443) 305-1122
6. Microtech c/o Raul Jurado, VP, Vienna, Va. (571) 297-4159
7. Goldschmitt & Associates c/o Mark Goldschmitt, CEO, Reston, Va. (703) 304-1604
8. BIT-Consultants, LLC c/o Robert L. Bailey, CEO, Stafford, Va. (703) 732-2163

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING STRATEGY

We utilize both public – private partnerships to implement successful training strategies linking education to work experience. This “earn and learn” model is a formalized, structured training program that combines supervised onsite job training with related technical instruction (typically classroom-based). We are able to meet the training needs of IT industry employers at low costs, while providing DOES participants with the opportunity to receive relevant, usable, hands-on, state-of-the-art training for in-demand jobs in the IT industry.

The VETS Group’s “Digital Outreach” program objective is to train and educate program participants as they transition into the local workforce and we provide the necessary resources for navigating through and accessing services, as well as, overcoming barriers to employment. As we coordinate with other local organizations to continuously provide participants with supportive services as well as counseling services for connecting participants to government and non-profit programs aimed at helping them with living expenses, veterans benefits and clinical treatments such as high levels of stress, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

We have a variety of established and successful technology training programs that align with the Department of Labor's high-demand Information Technology related instructional outline, including Network and Computer Systems Administrator (O*NET-SOC Code: 15-1142.00 RAPIDS Code: 1132HY) and Computer Support Specialist Desktop Support Technician (O*NET-SOC Code: 15-1151.00, RAPIDS Code: 2018HY). Each program is an intensive 18-24 week hands-on training program, designed to prepare participants for certifications and job readiness.

EXPERIENCE SERVING MILITARY VETERANS

The VETS Group program has established a community of partnerships that presently help military service members cope with unique challenges such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), as well as previously being incarcerated. Despite the offenders' circumstances, some justice-involved Veterans may be eligible for VA benefits, disability compensation, pension, education and training, health care, home loans, insurance, vocational rehabilitation and employment, and burial.

We have knowledge and understanding of VA Programs such as the VA Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) that are designed to help incarcerated Veterans successfully reintegrate back into the community after their release. A critical part of HCRV is providing information to Veterans while they are incarcerated, so they can plan for re-entry themselves. A primary goal of the HCRV program is to prevent Veterans from becoming homeless once they are reintegrated back into the community.

Additionally, the Veteran Justice Outreach (VJO) Initiative is designed to help Veterans avoid unnecessary criminalization because of mental illness and extended incarceration by ensuring eligible justice-involved Veterans receive timely access to VA health care, specifically mental health and substance use services (if clinically indicated) and other VA services and benefits as appropriate.

We are expanding the VETS Group's training and supportive services through the technology career program and associated career tracks which will measurably increase the number of returning citizens to receive mid-level technology jobs and who obtain an industry recognized technology certification within the high-demand technology sector. This will also increase the number of returning citizens accepted into technology pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship programs and post-secondary schools.

We have partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to establish a VA Learning Hub for Veterans in Washington, DC as part of the VA's Veterans Economic Communities Initiative (VECI). Utilizing the VETS Group VA Learning Hub, veterans will have the opportunity to access free online learning modules offered by Coursera. (www.coursera.org). The VA Learning Hubs provide an opportunity to build skills through a combination of online classes and in-person sessions. Each week participants will complete a Coursera course module online, and then attend a session to discuss the material with fellow learners and hear from experts in the field.

The courses being offered through the Vets Group Learning Hub include:

- Wireless Communications Emerging Technologies
- Career Success Specialization
- Creative Problem Solving
- Learning How to Learn
- Design Thinking for Innovation

PROGRAM DESIGN

The VETS Group Program design includes a 3-phased structure that is closely aligned with the DC Department of Employment Services' Project Empowerment jobs program. Our **First Phase** includes enrollment screening for eligible participants who have met the necessary minimum level of qualifications to apply. The **Second Phase** provides students with the framework and foundation to understand and comprehend the essentials in networking and information security. **Phase Three** builds on the students' fundamentals and prepares them for certification using hands-on labs and supplemental learning activities. During this phase, students will be re-introduced into selecting career paths for Network and Computer Systems Administration, as well as Computer Support Specialists, and Desktop Support Technicians. Advanced training will be provided using the VETS Group approved Cisco Network Training Academy, as well as CompTIA and Microsoft approved training classes.

FACILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The VETS Group training center is centrally located at 1200 18th Street, NW in downtown DC and is 100% ADA compliant to accommodate people with disabilities. There is over 3,500 square feet of space for meetings, counseling sessions, office space and three training areas--with one that can be configured to accommodate up to 90 people for auditorium style seating and up to 42 people for table settings. The center is furnished with chairs, tables, workstations, office desks, computer equipment, phones, copying machines, fax machine, printers, internet access, smart boards and PowerPoint projectors. Being centrally located in downtown DC has its benefits. The Center is easily accessible by the Metro subway system, Metrobus, car and taxi. The Metro subway stop is one block away on the Redline and the Metrobus stop is directly in front of the building. There are several parking garages within a one block radius of the building and ample parking on the street often at metered spaces.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The VETS Center operates between the hours of 9:30 am to 9:30 pm daily, to accommodate day and evening class schedules. The center is open on Saturdays for special activities from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. The on-site Pearson Vue Testing Center is open from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Tuesdays - Fridays. Online counseling will be available during non-traditional hours.