



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 14, 2012

New Veterans Retraining Assistance Program to Take Center Stage at Detroit *VA for Vets* Hiring Fair

WASHINGTON – In its ongoing efforts to provide unemployed Veterans with the education and training they need to compete for high-demand jobs, VA will seek out Veterans who may be qualified for its new Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) at the Detroit *VA for Vets* Hiring Fair June 26-28.

VRAP allows qualifying Veterans between the ages of 35 and 60 to receive up to 12 months of education assistance. Maximum payments are equal to the full-time rate for the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty, currently \$1,473 monthly. Under this program, Veterans apply on a first-come, first-served basis for programs that begin on or after July 1. VA began accepting applications May 15. VA can approve 45,000 Veterans through September 30 of this year and up to 54,000 Veterans may participate during the fiscal year beginning October 1. The program runs through March 2014.

“VA is committed to supporting Veterans as they seek employment. VRAP is a great program to give qualified Veterans the opportunity to find meaningful employment in a high-demand field,” said Under Secretary for Benefits Allison A. Hickey. “In addition to our other efforts to get the word out about VRAP, we believe the Detroit event is an excellent way to reach potentially qualified Veterans.”

At the Veteran Open House in Detroit, VA will give VRAP presentations several times a day to inform Veterans about the program and how to apply, and answer any questions. Veterans are encouraged to stop by to learn more about this new program.

VA is hosting three major events at Detroit’s Cobo Center June 26-29: The *VA for Vets* Hiring Fair, the Veteran Open House, and the National Veterans Small Business Conference and Expo. The events are expected to attract thousands of Veterans, business owners and federal employees, with an economic impact estimated at \$11 million for the city.

More than 22,000 federal, and private-sector job openings across the country will be available at the free Veteran Hiring Fair June 26-28. VA will bring together partners like the First Lady's "Joining Forces" initiative and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, along with private sector companies, during the fair. Not only will the fair provide Veterans an opportunity to showcase their skills to potential employers, it will also assist Veterans with resume preparation, interview techniques and career coaching. VA hosted a similar event Jan. 18 in Washington, D.C., which attracted over 4,100 Veterans and resulted in over 2,600 on-the-spot interviews and more than 500 tentative job offers.

The Open House gives Veterans and their families the chance to find out about the wide range of financial and health-care benefits, services and resources that are available from federal, state and community agencies. Veterans can conveniently enroll in VA care, sign up for eBenefits and MyHealthVet, and get their questions answered face to face.

The National Veterans Small Business Conference and Expo is the premier government event for Veteran-owned businesses. Last year's conference in New Orleans drew almost 5,000 attendees, and more than 6,000 participants are expected this year. VA will provide Veteran-owned and Service-Disabled Veteran-owned businesses with a wide range of information to help them maximize opportunities in the federal workplace.

Known historically as the world's capital for the transportation industry, the Detroit metro area is reinventing itself with six booming industries: medical research, defense, entertainment, green tech, urban farming, and aeronautics. About 330,000 Veterans are served by the city's VA medical center, and more than 704,000 Veterans live in Michigan.

VA invites all interested persons and businesses to attend. More information about the small business conference is available at www.nationalveteransconference.com. Information and the application for VRAP are available at www.benefits.va.gov/VOW/education.htm. Information on the hiring fair and how to register is available at www.VAforVets.VA.Gov/Detroit.