



News Release

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SBA Partner Veteran Institute for Procurement Training Program Reaches 1,000 Graduates Milestone

SBA Deputy Administrator Leslie was Commencement Speaker

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration’s partner, National Center for Veteran Institute for Procurement (VIP) today held a graduation ceremony in Potomac, Maryland for 51 veteran and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and also celebrated the achievement of training 1,000 veteran entrepreneurs over the past nine years.

“Nearly one in 10 small businesses in the U.S. is owned by a veteran. And the SBA is working – through our own efforts and with partners like VIP – to keep veteran entrepreneurship growing,” SBA Deputy Administrator Althea Coetzee Leslie said.

An educational program for owners, principals and executives of veteran-owned businesses, VIP trains service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and veteran-owned small businesses to compete for federal procurement opportunities. The three-day certification program’s curriculum is designed for veteran businesses to increase their ability to succeed by establishing effective business practices.

“The number of federal contracts awarded to service-disabled small businesses has exceeded the three percent goal every year since FY2012. We want more small businesses to qualify for these awards. That’s why we partner with VIP – to ensure qualified entrepreneurs get the training they need,” Leslie added.

VIP is comprised of three training programs:

- **VIP START** is for companies wanting to enter the federal market and become procurement ready.
- **VIP GROW** is the core curriculum which assists companies in developing strategies to expand and operate within the federal marketplace.
- **VIP INTERNATIONAL** is for companies that want to enter or expand their federal and commercial contracting opportunities overseas.

Starting out in 2009 and training veteran-owned businesses in the Washington, D.C. metro area, VIP has expanded and now offers the entrepreneurship curriculum nationwide, as well as in the U.S. territories Guam and Puerto Rico.

“With SBA’s leadership, VIP has been able to expand course offerings and train three times as many veterans,” VIP National Director Barbara A. Ashe said. “We are most thankful for their partnership and support in ‘Arming Vets to Win’.”

In addition to connecting with local resource networks, participants also have an opportunity to take advantage of the counseling and training offered by SBA’s resource partner network, which includes [Veterans Business Outreach Centers](#), [Women’s Business Centers](#), [Small Business Development Centers](#), and [SCORE](#).

Each year, SBA helps more than 200,000 veterans, service-disabled veterans, members of the National Guard and Reserve, and military spouses start and grow their small businesses. To learn more about opportunities for veterans available through the SBA, visit www.sba.gov/vets.

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About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. We empower entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start and grow their businesses. The SBA is the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses that is backed by the strength of the federal government.

The SBA delivers its services to people through an extensive network of field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more about SBA, visit www.sba.gov.