

Statement of

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Before the Joint Hearing of the

**Subcommittee on
Workforce, Empowerment and Government Programs
Committee on Small Business**

and

**Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity
Committee on Veterans' Affairs**

United States House of Representatives

With Respect To

The Status, Impact and New Directions of The Veterans Corporation

Washington, D.C.

May 24, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Madame Chairman, Ranking Members and Members of the Subcommittees, I thank you very much for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to discuss Veteran entrepreneurship, Veteran small business ownership, and economic opportunity and development by and for Veterans, as well as the National Veterans Business Development Corporation (“The Veterans Corporation”). In your invitation to testify, you asked me to answer two specific questions with regard to the Corporation: “...Is The Veterans Corporation providing those entrepreneurial services envisioned in the Act and needed by Veterans?” “Will the Corporation survive without federal funding?” I will address both of these questions in my testimony.

In December 2004, our Board Chairman, The Honorable Edward G. Lewis, briefed the Congressional Staff on TVC’s past accomplishments and future plan for program offerings to the Veteran entrepreneurial community. Our mandate outlined in PL 106-50 is to provide Veterans, including Service-Disabled Veterans, the knowledge, tools and resources they need to start and expand successful small businesses. This means providing access to entrepreneurial education and training, entrepreneurial mentoring and counseling, capital, and other business services.

The TVC Board-approved FY 2005-2009 Strategic Plan is provided in Attachment A to this statement. Concept Papers for the Corporation’s two major strategic initiatives, the National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative and the National Veterans Community-Based Organization Initiative, are also provided in Attachments B and C.

We believe Mr. Chairman and Madame Chairman, that you and your colleagues in Congress will understand through this testimony that Veterans' needs in 2005 are far different than those imagined in 1999. World events have prompted us to expand our definition of Veteran, to include those soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who are serving on active duty as well as those in the National Guard and Reserves.

TVC has taken this action because we know that there is significant stress currently being placed upon tens of thousands of Guard and Reserve members whose prolonged deployment on active duty is having a dramatically negative impact on their family businesses. According to the Department of Defense estimates over 45% of the current officers and 55% of the enlisted personnel have significant problems in their business enterprises. And over 5 million Veterans with Service Related Disabilities are served by VA hospitals every year with a majority having trouble finding or returning to prior employment upon discharge. These are only a few examples of how times are different. We will underline these statistics later in this presentation with statements from the active duty military currently enrolled in an entrepreneurship course now being offered in Iraq.

To fulfill TVC's Strategic Plan and to respond to this educational mandate, we have developed a plan with three bases to leverage existing educational institutions, to partner with strong community organizations, and to build our own centers where Veterans are without needed services. We have established eight regional education centers across the country, four in conjunction with existing SBA Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) including the Wharton School Business at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, The University of Georgia in Athens, The Office of

Economic Development and International Trade in Denver, and Southwestern College in San Diego. Four are represented by independent 501(c)3 organizations: BigAustin in Austin, the Northeast Veterans Business Resource Center in Boston, the Michigan Veterans Business Resource Center in Flint, and the St. Louis Veterans Business Resource Center. These regional education centers deliver entrepreneurial education and mentoring across the broad continuum of issues from start up to succession management for Veterans, including Service-Disabled Veterans. At the national level we have initiated an e-learning pilot program that will reach even more underserved Veterans in need.

This “Coast-to-Coast” methodology interfaces with and delivers programs, products and services to more than 10,000 Veterans, as our initial goal in FY 2005, as summarized below and detailed in Attachment D. A map showing each of the regional hubs is included in Attachment E.

Education Goals and Activities for the 2005 Fiscal Year by Region										
	Goals	1-Nor East	2-Mid Atlantic	3- So East	4- Gr Lakes	5- So West	6- Mid West	7- Rocky Mtn	8-West	Total
Traditional Courses	1625	133	122	604	47	14	17	1097	51	2085
Innovative Vet Modules	2020	192	26							218
Events/Seminars	5905			10		11				21
Mentoring/ Counseling	3750			506			187	451	52	1196
On Line	600									
Total	13900	325	148	1120	47	25	204	1548	103	3520

It is important to note that the chart illustrates the result of a new business model where a TVC grant based system is used that piggybacks upon existing educational and community organization infrastructure. The result is that we are reaching three times the number of Veterans in the first months of the new educational plan compared to FY 2004 annual performance. While enrollments/new course starts are cyclical within quarterly intervals, this data also demonstrates a 129% increase in enrollments for traditional courses above the FY 2005 goal.

The following is a summary of the Corporation's educational and community-based organization programs.

I. National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative (NVEEI)

"It's just the knowledge that you aren't by yourself. To know that there is a group of Veterans who understand what you need and are pulling for you rejuvenates you. Because of our mentors and the education program, doors are opening up for us. What we have gained...is priceless."

Terry Hawkins, Vietnam Veteran

Each of the Corporation's regional education centers lead entrepreneurial learning activities in their metropolitan areas and surrounding states. Business courses are taught on a regular basis to meet a mosaic of Veteran needs from new business ideas to mature business market niche development. Independent seminars are held on hot business topics, and modular approaches make piecing together just-in-time programs effective for Veteran adult learners. Veteran business mentors are the centerpieces of the program. Vets teaching Vets with real world experience in successful business strategies is key to the unusual success of our National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative. Veterans are served by a cornucopia of education strategies that support the

Corporation's extraordinary success rate of over 63% for new business start-ups (data gathered from selected TVC program administrators for Kauffman FastTrac courses).

The Corporation's successes in face-to-face entrepreneurial education are now being enhanced and expanded to the entire Veteran community via the web. An exciting current project involves active duty military taking courses from Iraq that are being run by our Northeast Regional Veterans Business Resource Center in Boston (for pictures, see Attachment F). This program requires only a Windows-based personal computer and an Internet connection. No training or prior online meeting experience is needed. The meeting organizers control all the activity directly from their own PC, quickly and easily exchanging ideas with participants anywhere in the world. The classes are twice per week. Classes are currently on Monday evening at 5:30-7:30 EDST and Tuesday mornings 6:30-8:30. These times have been adjusted in an attempt to allow US-based guest speakers a greater opportunity to participate in this program.

The first two classes held this week were an enormous success. Some of the immediate feedback from participants:

SFC Richard Guzofski "Thank you for this opportunity, these guys have been looking forward to this ever since we started putting it together, we are all very excited. They are willing to give up some of their sleep time to attend this training".

SPC David Posluszny – "I just finished your first class today. I'm in Iraq with the 1-102 FA. I have two more years of college at U Mass Amherst taking "Building Materials and Wood Technologies". I want to be a general contractor specializing in highly energy efficient designs, and this course will take me to my dream!

These comments clearly demonstrate the changing needs of today's service men and women as they think about their transition home to businesses that they want to dream about. The Veterans Corporation is becoming a central part of that dream and a

vehicle for literally leapfrogging over the barriers presented to Veterans as they return home to the U.S.

While I have been on the job less than twelve weeks, I have been working with our Board and staff to initiate the restructuring of our web presence to include an intuitive and completely interactive set of entrepreneurial education offerings for the entire Veteran community. The TVC web site will be simple, service-oriented and interactive for all who come to us for a wide range of services. Imagine a service mall in which the stores are different programs and services and the user can enter these stores and browse or shop for a variety of needed items. These changes bring TVC's services to the Veteran community in a 21st century format.

Part of that restructuring is the creation of an e-learning pilot titled: ***Veteran Access to the American Dream***. The pilot begins in early June and will continue for three months (pictures can be found in Appendix F). This exciting new educational offering gives The Veterans Corporation the ability to reach significant numbers of underserved Veterans in VA hospitals, returning Guard and Reserve units, currently transitioning servicemen and women as well as large rural and minority Veteran populations. There are three pillars of Veteran entrepreneurship education: Basic Skills, Business Skills, and Career Skills. Courses and modules will be delivered from our website. These skill courses will provide Veterans with a first-of-its-kind capability to deliver any of a wide range of competencies from marketing to applying for a business loan. Sites include Fisher House and the Walter Reed Hospital System in the Washington Metro Area, Central Texas from Houston through Dallas to Waco, Tampa-St. Petersburg and San Diego. The pilot will serve a minimum of 5,000-10,000 Veterans

and Service-Disabled Veterans. The roll out on materials for the first year in 2004-2005 will include many different types of modules and assessment and measurement strategies as well as active mentoring components.

A few of the potential targets in our plans are:

- E-learning delivered into the 3 largest VA hospitals systems that serve 2 million Veterans annually
- Reaching the largest concentration of identified Veterans in the world – 400,000 potential entrepreneurs in a pilot target group in 2004-2005
- Actively teaching in the 3 largest transitioning troop cities – 100,000 troops returning – 20,000 potential Veteran entrepreneurs in 2004-2005
- Working with the 3 largest Guard and Reserve Centers including over 50,000 service men and women

The Veterans Corporation accomplishes this by partnering with the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (First Step and Planning Your Entrepreneurial Venture will be transformed for website use), the Small Business Administration and its Small Business Development Center network, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, WestHall Alliance, many community colleges and universities as well as many other private organizations and government agencies. The best of the best educational courses and services will now be offered to Veterans on-line. Through these partnerships Veterans can be served worldwide through an entrepreneurial educational continuum supporting all Veteran learning needs for their entrepreneurial endeavors.

II. National Veterans Community-Based Organization Initiative (NVCBOI)

The Center *“was my champion for change when I needed one. This group can go places effectively that the rest cannot.”* Lawrence F. Kuberski, President, Gateway Tool and Cutter Grinding Services, St. Louis

We are also building community-based Veterans Business Resource Centers to deliver various programs and services. Our first center in St. Louis has been a huge success. Data showing the wide range of services and the successful mentoring of many underserved Veterans is demonstrated below with additional information in Attachment E.

St. Louis Veterans Business Resource Center Service Information

Time	Client Services			Type of Business		Special Client Groups			Ethnicity	
	New Clients	Email Assistance	Follow-up Visit	New	Old	Service-Disabled	Other Disabled	Guard/Reserve	Minority	White
Q1*	59	39	8	51	8	8	15	3	34	25
Q2	28	47	60	16	12	12	5	3	18	10
Q3	41	123	62	29	12	15	13	3	18	23
Q4	15	49	66	8	7	1	1	0	8	7
Total YTD	143	258	196	104	39	36	34	9	78	65
% of Total	24.00%	43.20%	32.80%	72.70%	27.30%	45.60%	43.00%	11.40%	54.50%	45.50%

*Q1: Jun-Aug 04; Q2: Sep-Nov 04; Q3: Dec 04-Feb 05; Q4: Mar-Apr 05

In addition, we have spoken with many of the clients, who uniformly express deep satisfaction and gratitude for these services, as reflected in the comments of Rodney Davis, a Service-Disabled Minority Veteran:

“Most people would not believe the success we have had, considering we have only been in business for eleven months. Even I don’t believe it sometimes. But we owe our success to TVC services and mentoring. You can’t quantify the value of what we learned, and it truly has been the key to our success.”

The Veterans Corporation plans to develop Veterans Business Resource Centers (VBRCs) nationally based on our successful initial experience in St. Louis. This VBRC serves as one of several potential models for individually tailored, community-based service centers that will serve Veterans of all types with a focus on entrepreneurship, market promotion, raising capital, networking, community development and leadership. The centers will be the centerpiece for a Veteran community advisory board and a network of skilled service providers and mentors. They will spearhead assessment, access to education and training, business incubators, and mentoring. They will support Veteran small business owners who have been called upon to serve their country for extended time periods. Most of all, they will be the major drivers in the national Veterans network for community economic development. The Veterans Corporation is looking at other cities including Austin, Atlanta, Boston, Denver, Philadelphia, San Diego, and Flint, Michigan.

The St. Louis model was built on the six activities or pillars of The Veterans Corporation:

Access and Assessment – VBRCs will serve as “conciierge” for the local Veteran community, providing access to ideas and services, and conducting ongoing assessments that will identify gaps in local business services, and designing a local program that provides specific access to education, tools, technology, capital, services, mentorship, networking and markets.

Business Incubators -- All of the providers and participants of the Corporation’s current programs across the nation think that business incubators are a significant element of the success of new entrepreneurs. Most of them have so little infrastructure that access to a copy machine and a computer loom as large obstacles to success. Incubator space for a wide range of types of business starts will be an important base for economic development.

Community Leadership/Advocacy – VBRCs will serve to galvanize community leadership with new energy and ideas from Veteran leaders who will work together to transform community economic development into an engine for enterprise and local prosperity.

Entrepreneurship Training/Counseling – VBRCs and affiliated groups will conduct entrepreneurship seminars and work with e-learning programs, business

plan development, product development, marketing that includes E-commerce, public and private procurement, legal assistance, accounting, insurance, licensing and certification, and technologies.

Networking – VBRCs will form a national network that provides a constant flow of new ideas and best practices into community development efforts. These networks will include a wide range of business leaders and affinity groups as well as core Veteran organizations.

Mentoring -- Leaders from the business community will do one-on-one mentoring as an integral part of the activities of the VBRC. This will add an important element to the spirit and spread of the entrepreneurial movement. It is equally important to support peer mentoring, because the best network, as attested to by current customers of the VBRC, is often one another and in the case of Veterans, is essential to success.

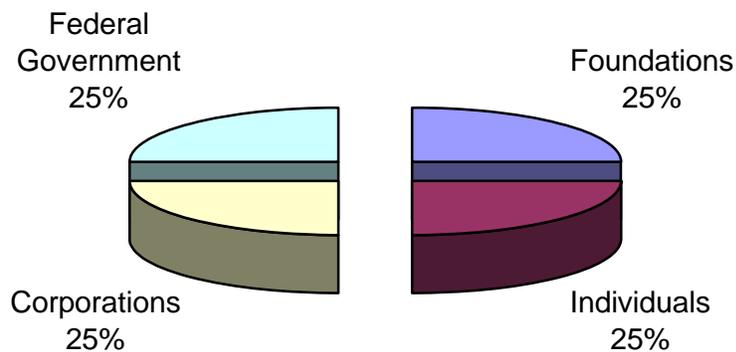
This is the most aggressive agenda, in both entrepreneurial education and local service delivery, that The Veterans Corporation has established. The vision and mission of The Veterans Corporation remains keenly focused on growing a strong base of Veteran entrepreneurs who, with knowledge gained through their time in service to our country, their discipline and strong work ethic, will become a dynamic driver in the economic development and growth of our nation. Today, The Veterans Corporation is delivering strong, “Veteranized” programs and services and will continue to build and strengthen this dynamic agenda and to reach out to many more entrepreneurial Veterans, including Service-Disabled Veterans.

The current challenges before TVC are a budget shortfall for FY 2005 and future funding for FY 2006 and beyond. While Congress provided the initial funding for The Veterans Corporation, it was envisioned that TVC would, over time, become self-funding. The reality TVC faces today is that without an immediate infusion of cash from the Federal Government, individuals, corporations and foundations TVC will be forced to close its doors October 1, 2005. My staff and I have taken a number of positive steps to

address this challenge. We are aggressively pursuing all funding avenues available to TVC in an effort to maintain programs and services to the entire Veteran entrepreneurial community.

Our plan builds on a platform of public and private partnerships that enhance and expand needed programs and services. To date TVC has prepared and submitted foundation grants totaling \$30 million, with another \$20 million in grant applications in the process of being written. We have initiated an outreach to “high net worth individuals” and to public and private corporations with an interest in assisting Veterans. We are also planning local special event fundraising and friend raising events in major cities where TVC has Education hubs or Veteran Business Resource Centers.

TVC Self-Sufficiency Partnerships



And perhaps most importantly TVC is in the process of reducing back office costs and is consolidating and reorganizing its staff. We are taking these steps because we

believe that when all is said and done, TVC needs funding of \$2 million a quarter, or at least \$8 million a year.

Mr. Chairman, Madame Chairman, I need to emphasize that the TVC Board and staff have prepared a plan for strategic partnerships to reach our goal of \$8 million in annual funding. We cannot do it alone. We think that the partnership with the United States Congress is an ongoing one that is needed based on the changing needs of Veterans we have articulated in this presentation.

We trust that you and your colleagues in Congress now understand that the needs of Veterans in 2005 are far different than those imagined in 1999. The Veterans Corporation, now more than ever, is uniquely prepared to work with Congress and the private sector to address these urgent needs of America's Veterans in 2005 and beyond. I encourage the Congress to join TVC in a long-term productive partnership.

In conclusion -- I want to thank the Chairmen, Ranking Members and both Subcommittees for their past interest and support on these issues. You have our promise to work in partnership with each of you to deliver the critical knowledge, tools and resources our Veterans, their families, your constituents, so richly deserve to succeed in entrepreneurial endeavors in their communities across our great nation.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

Statement of Disclosure

The National Veterans Business Development Corporation is currently in receipt of Federal funding at a total of \$14 million dollars (less OMB recessions) for FY 2000 through FY 2005 pursuant to Rule XI 2(k)(2) of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Appendix: The Veterans Corporation

Testimony of Walter G. Blackwell

Appendix A: 2005-2009 Strategic Plan

Appendix B: NVEEI Education Initiative

Appendix C: NVCBOI Veterans Business Resource Center
Initiative

Appendix D: Education Initiative Data

Appendix E: National Map of Regional Education Hubs and
Veterans Business Resource Centers

Appendix F: Visuals of the Iraq Course, the E-learning Pilot and
other presentation slides

Appendix G: Data from St. Louis Veterans Business Resource
Center

Appendix A

July 25, 2004

THE VETERANS CORPORATION

NATIONAL VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

CORPORATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2005-2009

I. VISION

The Veterans Corporation (TVC) will be the premier organization in the world assisting America's Veterans, including Service-Disabled Veterans, in creating and expanding their entrepreneurial endeavors and Veteran-owned small business enterprises by providing access to knowledge, tools and resources necessary for success.

II. MISSION

The Veterans Corporation (TVC) will:

A. Expand the provision of and improve access to technical assistance regarding entrepreneurship for the Nation's Veterans.

B. Assist Veterans, including Service-Disabled Veterans, with the formation and expansion of small business concerns by working with and organizing public and private resources, including those of the Small Business Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labor, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Defense, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, the Small Business Development Centers, and the business development staffs of each department and agency of the United States.

**THE VETERANS CORPORATION
FY 2005-2009 STRATEGIC PLAN**

III. CORPORATE GOALS

A. Become the **premier advocate** for Veterans, including Service-Disabled Veterans, in creating and expanding their entrepreneurial endeavors and their Veteran-owned, small business enterprises and in providing the President and the Congress an **Annual Report** on the Corporation's activities and accomplishments and on the efforts of Federal, State, and private organizations to assist Veterans in the formation and expansion of small business concerns.

B. Continue to implement a cohesive plan to **raise private funds** in order to become a **financially, self-sustaining** corporation and to achieve the Federally-mandated self-sufficiency requirement in accordance with Public Law 106-50.

C. Develop the **strategic vision** and provide proactive, positive, national-level, **strategic leadership** to build a coalition of private and public organizations in order to successfully implement the **National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative**.

D. Develop a **strategic vision** and provide proactive, positive, national-level, **strategic leadership** to build a coalition of private and public organizations in order to successfully implement the **National Veterans Community-Based Organization Initiative**.

E. Establish key **strategic business partnerships** with private sector organizations to support and enhance TVC programs.

F. Establish effective **strategic working relationships** with all components of Federal, State, and local governments that have responsibilities to assist Veterans in the formation and expansion of small business concerns.

G. Establish **effective alliances** with all Veteran Service Organizations to gain their support and commitment for TVC's programs, and to obtain their assistance in the successful implementation of these programs.

H. Develop and implement TVC programs which provide Veterans **access to knowledge, tools and resources** necessary to succeed in their entrepreneurial efforts and Veteran-owned small businesses.

I. Establish strategic venues for effective **business networking and knowledge sharing** opportunities for Veterans and Veteran-owned small businesses.

THE VETERANS CORPORATION FY 2005-2009 STRATEGIC PLAN

J. Establish and maintain a network of **information and assistance centers** for use by Veterans and the public, emphasizing and leveraging information technologies and the Internet.

K. Continue to implement a dynamic, positive **communications program and public relations plan** directed toward government agencies at all levels, private sector organizations, Veteran Service Organizations, Veterans, and Veteran-owned small businesses to highlight TVC's mission, goals and programs.

L. Continue to oversee a **Professional Certification Advisory Board** in accordance with Public Law 106-50 to **create uniform guidelines and standards for the professional certification** of members of the Armed Forces to aid in their efficient and orderly transition to civilian occupations and professions and to remove potential barriers in the areas of licensure and certification.

M. Develop and implement a **comprehensive plan**, and then to be updated annually, in cooperation with the **Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs**, for **joint public-private sector efforts** to facilitate growth and development of small business concerns owned and controlled by Veterans.

N. Assume the duties, responsibilities and authority of the **Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs** on October 1, 2004.

O. **Administer the affairs** of The Veterans Corporation through the Board of Directors, fairly and impartially and without discrimination in accordance with Public Law 106-50 as a federally chartered corporation incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia, and **disburse TVC funds** in accordance with the purposes of NVBDC and approved by the Board of Directors.

**THE VETERANS CORPORATION
FY 2005-2009 STRATEGIC PLAN**

STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDANCE – FY 2005

The following Strategic Guidance is provided to the Corporate Staff to assist in the development and implementation of Corporate Objectives and Initiatives during FY 2005 in support of the above stated Corporate Goals.

As noted above, the TVC Strategic Plan (Vision, Mission and Corporate Goals) is now focused on a five-year timeframe. However, the Corporate Staff will develop Corporate Objectives and Initiatives in support of the Corporate Goals appropriate for implementation during FY 2005 with the understanding that the individual Corporate Goals do not have to be accomplished within a one-year timeframe.

In order to effectively evaluate the Corporation's activities at the end of FY 2005, the Corporate Staff is also directed to develop very specific performance metrics for each Corporate Objective and Initiative, which is developed for implementation during FY 2005.

Achieving all Corporate Goals is important to the future success of The Veterans Corporation; however, some Corporate Goals are more important than other Corporate Goals in the short term.

The above stated Corporate Goals are therefore divided into the following three categories with the Extremely Important Category having the highest priority for level of effort by the Corporate Staff in developing and implementing Corporate Objectives and Initiatives and for the proper and optimum allocation of resources, including the need to consolidate and conserve our limited resources of time, money and personnel.

The new Corporate Goal, the National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative, should provide a comprehensive, all encompassing, high quality, lifelong entrepreneurial learning continuum, to include a wide range of formal and informal entrepreneurial education, training, networking, mentoring and counseling, and assistance in the most cost efficient & effective manner possible to as many Veterans as possible, including Reserve and Guard personnel, in full support of their entrepreneurial endeavors and small business enterprises -- from pre-Vet to startup to growth to maturity to ultimate entrepreneurial success.

The new Corporate Goal, the National Veterans Community-Based Initiative, should provide a comprehensive, all encompassing, high quality, community-based organizational environment at the local level, providing a cost effective and efficient local service delivery and support system, to include, but not be limited to, a wide range of formal and informal entrepreneurial education, training, networking, mentoring and counseling, and access to tools, technologies, capital, services and markets to as many

Veterans as possible, including Reserve and Guard personnel, in full support of their entrepreneurial endeavors and small business enterprises -- from pre-Vet to startup to growth to maturity to ultimate entrepreneurial success.

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT CORPORATE GOALS:

Corporate Goal B: Raise private funds; become financially self-sustaining

Corporate Goal C: Implement the National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative
(This Corporate Goal will also encompass Corporate Goals A & E-J)

Corporate Goal D: Implement the National Veterans Community-Based Organization Initiative
(This Corporate Goal will also encompass Corporate Goals A & E-J)

Corporate Goal O: Administer the affairs of TVC in accordance with P.L. 106-50

VERY IMPORTANT CORPORATE GOALS:

Corporate Goal A: Become the premier advocate for Veterans for their entrepreneurial and small business efforts

Corporate Goal E: Establish strategic business partnerships in private sector

Corporate Goal F: Establish strategic working relationships with Federal entities

Corporate Goal G: Establish effective alliances with all VSOs

Corporate Goal H: Develop & implement programs to provide access to knowledge, tools& resources

Corporate Goal I: Establish strategic venues for business networking and knowledge sharing

Corporate Goal J: Establish a network of information and assistance centers

Corporate Goal K: Implement dynamic communications program and public relations plan

IMPORTANT CORPORATE GOALS:

Corporate Goal L: Oversee the PCAB

Corporate Goal M: Implement comprehensive plan in cooperation with ACVBA

Corporate Goal N: Assume duties, responsibilities and authority of ACVBA

Appendix B

National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative Implementation Plan

January 24, 2005

Rationale

Many organizations in both the private and public sectors have provided and continue to provide various forms of entrepreneurial education and educational assistance that Veterans may use in support of their entrepreneurial efforts and small business activities. These organizations include The Veterans Corporation (TVC), SBDCs, SCORE, WBCs, MEPs, PTACs, VBOPs, DVA-CVE, SBA-OVBD as well as various university entrepreneurship programs, centers for innovation, and chambers of commerce.

The strategic vision of the National Veteran Education Entrepreneurship Initiative (NVEEI) of The Veterans Corporation is to provide a comprehensive, lifelong entrepreneurial learning continuum to include a wide range of formal and informal entrepreneurial education, training, networking, mentoring and counseling, and assistance activities for Veterans in full support of their entrepreneurial endeavors and small business enterprises: from pre-Vet to start up, to growth, to maturity, and to ultimate entrepreneurial success.

The goal is to provide high quality entrepreneurial education in the most efficient and effective manner to assist as many Veterans, including Service Disabled Veterans, as well as transitioning military personnel, Reserve and Guard personnel, as possible in their entrepreneurial efforts and business activities along this continuum.

The objectives of NVEEI are:

- To develop and provide a coordinated national level focus and framework represented by the entrepreneurial learning continuum concept.
- To build the necessary coalition of people and organizations dedicated to building and implementing successful entrepreneurial education and assistance.
- To identify, develop, coordinate, leverage and use all available resources and capabilities across the nation in the private and public sectors in order to significantly serve Veteran entrepreneurship needs.

To be truly successful in helping entrepreneurial Veterans over the long term, The Veterans Corporation (TVC) must be able to develop and deliver effective programs and

services that are unique and that directly support Veteran entrepreneurship. These programs must also significantly grow in order to reach out to as many Veterans as possible providing them with the highest quality, most cost-effective and efficient programs and services possible. Uniqueness and growth are critical. Therefore TVC must form coalitions, leverage resources, and develop and implement educational programs and activities that target significant numbers of Veterans and respond to their unique needs and aspirations.

This rationale lays the foundation for the implementation phases of the 10-year NVEEI initiative to reach literally millions of Veterans in need of entrepreneurship education. The first phase will be the focus of this plan. That phase is summarized by the campaign title: Teach 10,000 Veterans Entrepreneurship in 2005. The second phase is a two-year commitment for 2006-2007 that is summarized by the campaign to significantly impact Veteran entrepreneurship in every state in the United States at every stage of the continuum and reach 100,000 Veterans.

The third phase is a three year commitment for 2008-2010 to create a virtual Global Veteran Entrepreneurship Education Program that will provide the glue for the continuum from pre-service, service, and transitioning Veterans including 1,000,000 Veterans. The fourth phase is a four-year commitment for 2011-2014 to expand and solidify networks to reach at least 4,000,000, but hopefully every single one of the Veterans who are potential or engaged in entrepreneurship. Only then will we have succeeded in our ideal.

Phase One 2005: Teach 10,000 Veterans Entrepreneurship in 2005

The Teach 10,000 Veterans Entrepreneurship in 2005 campaign centers upon the goal of assisting Veterans in their entrepreneurship needs through just in time education in a wide variety of settings and through distance learning. Whether the Veteran desires to begin a business or to improve an existing one, The Veterans Corporation's education programs will fit their needs. Recent studies show that Veterans have invested more in education than their non-military counterparts and acquire valuable professional skills during their service. They also show that Veterans have more of a tendency to go into business than other population groups. Finally, increase numbers of studies are showing that recent Veterans have significant transition problems in both determining if and when they should go into business and how to salvage many once thriving businesses that have languished due to service commitments. There is therefore a large, ready audience for business programs of a wide range of types.

TVC will launch its 2005 Campaign from eight regional centers across the United States. They are located in Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Denver, Flint, Philadelphia, San Diego and St. Louis. Each of these centers has pledged to train 1-2,000 Veterans in 2005. It is important to note that these centers already significantly demonstrate the spread of possible partnerships making Veteran education strong: SBDCs, WBCs, entrepreneurship organizations,

universities and VA sites. These centers are working on a multi-dimensional strategy consisting of the following elements:

- Maximizing a wide variety of training approaches that fit regional needs
- Utilizing many high quality venues including classrooms, special seminars, association programs and distance learning
- Partnering with at least 3-5 community-based, state and/or national organizations that are currently serving Veteran educational needs

In addition there will be several special projects devoted to specific needs of Veterans groups. They also include partnerships with the full range of possible Veterans organizations including government agencies.

- Disabled Veterans will be reached by distance learning specifically suited to their needs
- Native American Veterans will be served through programs working directly with tribal communities
- Women Veterans will be assisted through partnerships with entrepreneurship centers
- Minority Veterans will be served through targeted programs in major US cities
- Veterans in areas of high growth technology, health and other industries will be served by new programs designed to meet workforce needs

TVC's goal for 2005 is to begin the basic activities that will under gird a national movement forging a Veteran entrepreneurship alliance that will serve as a major force for economic development proving that Veterans can serve the economic needs of their country with the same excellence that they have demonstrated in their military service.

Regional Model and Regional Implementation Plans

In order for a national movement to be anchored, it needs to have regional support that will provide local applications that are unique as well as infrastructure that will provide direction to both planning and activities. This regional support will be provided by the strategic location of Veterans Business Resource Centers (VBRCs) as hubs for activity in each of eight regions. The synergy between local centers that are serving a wide range of needs of Veterans and a wide range of educational programs will provide a strong base for national impact.

Eight VBRC sites will be established in 2005 through a combination of TVC and grant funding along with local fundraising campaigns. They include the following sites and states (See map in Attachment A):

- 1 - Northeast: Boston Hub: Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- 2 - Mid Atlantic: Philadelphia Hub: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.
- 3 - Southeast: Atlanta Hub: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.
- 4 - Great Lakes: Flint Hub: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin.
- 5 - Southwest: Austin Hub: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.
- 6 - Midwest: St. Louis Hub: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota
- 7 - Rocky Mountains: Denver Hub: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming,
- 8 - West: San Diego Hub: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington

Each of these regions will train 1-2,000 Veterans in 2005. Each will begin to institutionalize regional campaigns for Veteran education services. Plans will be submitted in January, 2005 to establish benchmarks and funding needs and opportunities. Sample plans are included in Appendix B.

Six Major Education Activities

The 2005 campaign will be implemented through six major education activities. They include:

1. Teaching courses in structured settings such as classrooms
2. Offering flexible modules on topics where knowledge is needed
3. Presenting ideas about entrepreneurship that improve opportunities
4. Guiding Veterans to valuable resources
5. Pairing Veterans with mentors who provide key educational experiences
6. Engaging Veterans in flexible distance learning offerings

Teaching courses in structured settings such as classrooms. Currently, the TVC education program has a focus on Kauffman Foundation FastTrac courses, particularly New Venture and Planning. Much has been accomplished over the past few years in training Veterans through these courses. Over 1,000 Veterans have taken one or both courses and have begun new businesses or reinvigorated existing businesses as a result. This teaching will remain a key component of the new campaign. To this point in this year, FastTrac courses are planned and operating in over 20 states. These courses will continue to be conducted under TVC national office leadership until April 1. After that time, regional directors will incorporate FastTrac course planning and implementation into the regional plans under the regional model.

There is a wide range of offerings available to Veterans who are interested in entrepreneurship. The goal of the new TVC NVEEI plan will be to utilize the courses that are most likely to fit Veteran needs in the regions. Regional Directors will work with others to survey the needs of Veterans as well as available materials to fit their needs. TVC will bring on board an Instructional Designer January 31, 2005 to survey materials and needs nationally. The Instructional Designer will work continuously with the Regional Directors to assess needs, to survey existing course materials from a wide range of sources, and to develop materials as needed to meet gaps in course delivery.

It is anticipated that approximately 2,000 of the 10,000 Veterans educated in 2005 will be involved in courses offered in structured settings such as classrooms.

Offering flexible modules on topics where knowledge is needed. TVC surveys and those of others such as the SBA and Department of Labor demonstrate that there are specific needs for modular education in which a 2-4 hour module is created and taught in a wide range of flexible settings. There are specific needs for modules on procurement, marketing in various local areas, thinking about starting a Veteran-owned business, and many more.

The TVC Instructional Designer will make a complete survey of available modules on a wide range of topics as indicated by the current Veteran surveys and the TVC Regional Directors. Modules will be amended, repackaged, and developed as needed in key areas. Currently, TVC is encouraging those with materials or needs to submit them so that they

can be reviewed. It is also working with the Denver Regional Hub in the creation of materials for Veterans on business development.

Approximately 15 modules will be planned and implemented during 2005. These modules will be a combination of existing offerings, repackaged offerings, and new modules developed by The Veterans Corporation or under TVC auspices. These modules will be able to be used singly in presentation settings or linked together to form certificate programs. These modules will be disseminated nationally and internationally.

It is anticipated that approximately 2,000 Veterans of the 10,000 Veterans educated in 2005 will be involved in modular education.

Presenting ideas about entrepreneurship that improve opportunities. There are a wide range of opportunities through work with Veteran Service Organizations and many other professional and community groups to plant the spark of entrepreneurship in the minds of Veterans. Many are eager to find fulfilling jobs. The nation as a whole needs successful entrepreneurs more than it ever has to spark the economy and to build the future. Moving the Veteran from interest, confusion or lack of direction into entrepreneurship is an important educational function for The Veterans Corporation.

A series of presentation formats will be surveyed and created in order to utilize meeting and seminar situations occurring in all of the various organizations that share interests in Veteran entrepreneurship. It is anticipated that Regional Directors will include many partners in the effort to “get the word out” about the possibilities and potential of Veteran entrepreneurship. The Corporation will create at least a half dozen formats to be used to reach Veterans who would like to think about starting a business as well as employing other Veterans in need.

It is anticipated that approximately 1,000 Veterans of the 10,000 Veterans educated in 2005 will be involved in presentations about entrepreneurship. This number could easily be substantially increased.

Guiding Veterans to valuable resources. This has been and will continue to be one of the central goals of The Veterans Corporation. Information is a key part of Veteran education, which is underutilized because of lack of knowledge of available resources. Many, many Veterans need information about a particular law, a new opportunity to expand their business, or details about a particular innovation in their area of business growth. It is clear that the partners involved in this goal also have independently created resource bases. The key here is to mesh these resources so that substantially more Veterans can be matched with the specific resources they need.

Under this activity, TVC will promote the gaining of information by Veterans from any source. It will attempt to lead Veterans to courses, websites, people, information clearinghouses created by any reliable information purveyor. In this way, TVC will bring value added to existing resource bases by encouraging Veteran use of all partner resources.

It is anticipated that approximately 2,000 Veterans of the 10,000 Veterans educated in 2005 will be involved in securing educational resources that they need in order to begin a business or to improve their business substantially.

Pairing Veterans with mentors who provide key educational experiences. Veteran education requires sustained counseling and mentoring situations that are an integral part of the individual educational experience. Without this key element, Veteran education is likely to fail. Pairing Veterans with business mentors has been an extremely successful part of the TVC education program. It is becoming increasingly vital as Veterans need help in growing their business during the initial stages. Every Veteran we have interviewed who has sustained a mentorship experience has believed it to be the most important element of their business education.

Regional directors will actively seek business mentors and incorporate them into their planning and programming in an effort to develop an active regional mentorship council for as many Veterans engaged in entrepreneurship education as possible. A national Veteran mentorship program will be established and communications will be made throughout the national network linking mentors across the country. Mentors will therefore get to meet mentors in similar businesses in other states and mentees will benefit from a broad range of experiences.

It is anticipated that approximately 1,000 Veterans of the 10,000 Veterans educated in 2005 will be involved in mentorship relationships that will have a significant impact on their business ventures through the wide experiences shared as part of their education into an expanded business world.

Engaging Veterans in flexible distance learning offerings. Distance learning is an important part of Veteran education because of the fact that most Veterans cannot reach a formal classroom for a variety of reasons and most need to have self-paced, flexible educational tools at the time they need them. Therefore, distance learning can serve Veterans from VA hospitals to remote rural farming areas. TVC is currently engaging a Disabled Veteran-owned distance learning business to work with the education program in order to serve Veterans who are transitioning in hospitals. This pilot project is part of a much larger effort to gauge the true potential of distance learning for Veterans.

It is expected that several of the regional sites will be actively engaged in distance learning pilots during 2005. Philadelphia has volunteered to be such a site. TVC will engage the Philadelphia distance learning effort as part of the NVEEI initiative. Philadelphia is currently testing materials on line to be used in Veteran entrepreneurship efforts.

It is anticipated that approximately 2,000 Veterans of the 10,000 Veterans educated in 2005 will be involved in distance learning offerings of a wide variety of types.

Timeline for Implementation

During 2005 the timeline for implementation includes the following key benchmark dates:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| Feb 1 | 4 Regional Hubs established with approved implementation plans |
| | Distance learning pilot development initiated |
| | Entrepreneurship course teaching of Veterans will be increased |
| | Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences |
| Mar 1 | 4 remaining Regional Hubs established with approved implementation plans |
| | Resource inventory will be compiled to demonstrate what is available for Veterans in entrepreneurship education and what they key needs are |
| | Entrepreneurship course teaching of Veterans will be increased |
| | Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences |
| | Distance learning pilot materials developed |
| Apr 1 | New regional model in full implementation |
| | Entrepreneurship course teaching of Veterans will be increased |
| | New flexible modules will be developed and first flexible modules from Denver will be tested |
| | Presentations will be made about entrepreneurship ideas |
| | Veterans will be guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources |

Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences

Distance learning pilot materials begin to be implemented

May 1

New flexible modules will be developed and tested

Presentations will be made about entrepreneurship ideas

Veterans will be guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources

Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences

Distance learning pilot materials revised

Jun 1

Entrepreneurship course teaching of Veterans will be increased

New flexible modules will be developed and tested, revised modules will be implemented

Presentations will be made about entrepreneurship ideas

Veterans will be guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources

Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences

Distance learning pilot materials begin to be available and used

Jul 1

New flexible modules will be developed and tested, revised modules will be implemented

Presentations will be made about entrepreneurship ideas

Veterans will be guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources

Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences

Mentors will form regional and national networks and a mentor conference or teleconference will be held

Distance learning pilot materials in full use by pilot groups

Aug 1

1,000 Disabled Veterans will be using distance-learning materials on entrepreneurship education

New flexible modules will be tested, revised modules will be implemented

Presentations will be made about entrepreneurship ideas

Veterans will be guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources

Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences

Distance learning materials in full use by pilot groups

Sep 1

Entrepreneurship course teaching of Veterans will be increased

Survey will demonstrate that regional and national coalitions with 12 major partners will have been developed and are being implemented

Each Regional Hub will demonstrate 3-5 significant partnerships with organizations currently serving Veteran education needs have been implemented

Survey will demonstrate that responses to 2 primary needs in Veteran entrepreneurship education are being implemented.

Presentations will have been made to over 1,000 Veterans about entrepreneurship ideas

Veterans will be guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources

Veterans will be paired with mentors who provide key educational experiences

Distance learning materials in full use by pilot groups

- Oct 1 200 women Veterans will be assisted through partnerships with entrepreneurship centers.
- Over 1,000 minority Veterans will be served through targeted programs in major US cities
- Over 1,000 Veterans in areas of high growth technology will be served by new programs
- Over 2,000 Veterans will be registered in FastTrac and other entrepreneurship courses
- Over 2,000 Veterans will have been guided to major database and individual entrepreneurship resources
- Over 1,000 Veterans will have been mentored with a rich array of educational experiences
- Over 2,000 Veterans have registered for distance learning modules and courses
- Nov 1 Native Americans in the Southwest will be served through programs in a pilot test that will then be disseminated nation-wide
- Dec 1 8 regional hubs will have gained local and national recognition and the entrepreneurial learning continuum will be a known concept and in full implementation

Appendix C

NVCBOI OPERATIONAL PLAN

Service men and women are currently returning from Iraq and Afghanistan as they did earlier from Vietnam in large numbers and finding, as did their predecessors that services for Veterans, particularly in the small business area, are either virtually unavailable or difficult to locate. There are also many reservists and guardsmen and women yet to be deployed serving as civilian Veterans. They are all eager to serve their communities and contribute to economic development. The impact of the movement proposed here is:

- *A wide range of Veteran entrepreneurs living in major communities across the country will benefit directly and significantly from new entrepreneurial ideas and services.*
- *Veteran leaders will promote a community-wide mobilization of a “can-do” spirit that will change mentalities as well as provide a venue for new voices in local problem solving.*
- *Community economic development will be sustained by grassroots Veteran entrepreneurial leadership and participation as well as by a strong national community-based organization (CBO) partner network.*

The Idea

Our idea is that a Veteran community economic development movement can be a significant force for improving the future of communities nationally. There are several important reasons. The Veteran population is large: over 26.4 million with an estimated 4.6 million Veteran-owned businesses (2000 US Census). They are concentrated in major cities in California, Florida, Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts. According to Department of Defense and Department of Labor statistics, approximately 200,000 service members leave active duty each year. These Veterans are mature, skilled and loyal workers who want the opportunity to lead and serve in their communities. They represent a largely untapped resource for community development and change.

The National Veterans Business Development Corporation, carrying out activities as The Veterans Corporation, is a Federally-chartered 501(c)(3) Corporation that was created by Public Law 106-50 in 1999. This law recognized that America “has done too little to assist Veterans in playing a greater role in the economy of the United States.”

The Corporation was charged with creating and enhancing entrepreneurial business opportunities for Veterans and Service Disabled Veterans. The Veterans Corporation strives to be the premier organization assisting and advocating for America's Veterans, including Service Disabled Veterans, in creating and expanding their entrepreneurial activities. It now supports projects serving thousands of Veterans nationwide (see www.veteranscorp.org).

TVC can act as a lynchpin because it is independent, yet fully linked into the Veteran community. The Veterans Corporation has shown its leadership and skill at mobilizing veterans in at least two noteworthy ways. First, it has initiated the National Veterans Community-Based Organization Initiative (concept paper attached) in order to mobilize Veterans in major communities nationwide. Under this rubric it has begun a Community-Based Organization (CBO) in St. Louis with several others emerging in other cities. Community business executives, government and service officials as well as clients testify that the St. Louis CBO is doing outstanding work that has made a huge difference in the entrepreneurial thrust for community development there. As Robert Fulstone, retired VP of CBS and a noted media consultant says:

“Veterans are often isolated from their “Veteranness” and they really want to work with others and bring “value-added” to the community. They know leadership and responsibility, and yet they can be a casualty of life because of their war experiences if they do not get a boost. This place is that booster for them, and for the whole community.”

Second, TVC has formed the National Veterans Entrepreneurial Education Initiative that aims to empower Veterans through educational services of a wide variety of types ranging from hands-on work with veterans in homeless shelters to high level mentoring by Veteran Fortune 500 executives. The Boston area Veterans Entrepreneurial Training Program has helped at least eleven Veterans to start or grow their businesses in the last six months

What we have found is that while TVC can, and increasingly does, act as a national facilitator, the home-grown CBOs are vital for grassroots success. What is a CBO? It is an independent 501(c)(3) organization under the TVC umbrella in a major city serving four important purposes: 1) to activate a clearinghouse of entrepreneurial associates and services for Veterans; 2) to catalyze community Veteran leadership; to give it strong voices, ideas and actions that promote economic development; 3) to provide entrepreneurship training in a lifelong educational continuum that contributes to community life; and 4) to mobilize a national network of a wide variety of coalitions, all sharing a common goal of increasing Veteran leadership in entrepreneurship that propels community economic development.

The CBOs form a major resource base for the movement with one-on-one, Vet-to-Vet services, but they also serve as a conduit for a confluence of voices that are both unheard and too often unheralded by their communities. In short, the CBOs prove that

Veterans matter and their voices are important to shared local community economic development success. Veterans can mobilize others to lead and to succeed. The result transforms communities. There is no better case we have found to demonstrate this success than that of Judith Johnson-Hawkins who says:

“Being a Veteran is what I am most proud of. It (the St. Louis CBO) felt so empowering.... I couldn’t figure out the Vets piece in entrepreneurship before now, and it was so important to do.” Judie is a partner with her husband, Terry, in a growing, flourishing business, Ichi-Ban & Associates, and is a major figure in United Way raising funds to support small business entrepreneurs with facilities funding and business incubators.

The Plan

TVC plans to develop CBOs nationally based on successful initial experiences in St. Louis. This CBO serves as a model for individually tailored, community-based service centers that will serve Veterans of all types with a focus on entrepreneurship, market promotion and community leadership. Veterans are a population that is reflective of the diversity of the nation and they include a full range of minorities in disproportionately large numbers. In fact, the Veteran population can be said to be the original Rainbow Coalition, encompassing men and women of all races, religious beliefs and lifestyles. The centers will be the fulcrum for a community advisory board and a network of skilled service providers and mentors. They will spearhead assessment, education and training, business incubators, and mentoring. They will build clearinghouses on websites that will increase access to services of all types a thousand fold. They will support Veteran business owners who have been called upon to serve their country for extended time periods. Most of all, they will be the major drivers in the national Veterans network for community economic development.

The network for community economic development has begun with the identification of leaders and veteran owned businesses in each of the sites where we want to have the four original national hubs: Boston, Cleveland, and San Antonio as well as St. Louis. In each of these cities there are many partners eager to join in a network to support the civic economic development movement. The Veterans Business Resource Center Advisory Board in St. Louis is currently being activated with strong leadership from Richard P. Grote of American Medical Claims.

The St. Louis model is being built on the six activities or pillars of The Veterans Corporation:

Access and Assessment – CBOs will serve as clearinghouses for the local Veteran community, providing access to ideas and services, and conducting ongoing assessments that will identify gaps in local business services, and designing a local program that provides specific access to

education, tools, technology, capital, services, mentorship, networking and markets.

Community Leadership/Advocacy – CBOs will serve to galvanize community leadership with new energy and ideas from Veteran leaders who will work together to transform community economic development into an engine for enterprise and local prosperity.

Entrepreneurship Training/Counseling – CBOs and affiliated groups will conduct entrepreneurship seminars in business plan development, product development, marketing that includes E-commerce, public and private procurement, legal assistance, accounting, insurance, licensing and certification, and technologies.

Networking – CBOs will form a national network that provides a constant flow of new ideas and best practices into community development efforts. These networks will include a wide range of business leaders and affinity groups as well as core Veteran organizations.

Mentoring -- Leaders from the business community will do one-on-one mentoring as an integral part of the activities of the CBO. This will add an important element to the spirit and spread of the entrepreneurial movement. It is equally important to support peer mentoring, as the best network, as attested to by current clients of the CBO, is often one another and in the case of Veterans, is essential to success.

Business Incubators -- All of the providers and participants of current TVC programs across the nation think that business incubators are a significant element of the success of new entrepreneurs. Most of them have so little infrastructure that access to a copy machine and a computer loom as large obstacles to success. Incubator space for a wide range of types of business starts will be an important base for economic development.

With these services linked directly to community needs, Veterans will have programs and services tailored to their needs in their communities that help them to meet their economic development goals and aspirations. The leadership pool for entrepreneurship will increase several fold.

In the initial years, we intend to fund each CBO with \$250,000 per year. Each local operation will be required to provide half that amount in matching funds. In addition, TVC will hire a Director, a National Network Coordinator, and an Administrative Coordinator. We will hire one additional Coordinator for each 10 new CBOs added to the network. In addition, travel and other direct costs will add to the expense. We estimate that a network of 10 CBOs will cost approximately \$3.0 million per year to run

and maintain. Allocations of indirect costs will add another \$100,000 annually to that total, so that the fully loaded cost to TVC would be approximately \$3.1 million.

Based on the experience of these initial centers, we will diversify the model and make it transportable to many more cities. Obviously the pace of expansion is highly contingent on our ability to generate funds to finance new operations. The national movement is a special goal, as we strongly believe that once Veterans are mobilized in these cities and once advisory board members are activated locally and nationally, we will succeed in grassroots leadership which is not only sustainable, but unstoppable.

Benefits and Impact

We will be able to measure impact in terms of who was assisted and their success in entrepreneurship. We will gather statistical data, but we will also chart the stories of people involved so that we can see not only who benefits, but who gives back into the community to promote economic development. The twinning of these two outcomes is gathering force in St. Louis as this is being written.

We all have seen small groups of determined people change communities. We have a higher aspiration. We want to change the dynamic of the dialogue about economic development in these communities. We want many new voices to be heard. We want many more leaders to step up to the task in ways that contribute to the greater good of the entire community. We have seen in our efforts so far that those on the bottom can rise to the top and can do so helping others come with them. The “can-do” spirit is a shared community spirit, not an individual one.

Over the four-year period and beyond, we will assess the leadership of Veterans in these communities. The leaders will be evaluated based on community goals and aspirations. We will also interview leaders and assess long-term commitments. TVC will be judged by their success, but also in the national movement growth. The headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia will be charged with making the four models the hub of a network of successful CBOs in every city in need and in every state by linking the ideas, values and best practices into a strong national force including all major community groups.

Next Steps

- Identify other cities/municipalities that are good candidates for this program. Pittsburgh, PA is in the process of becoming our second CBO site. Discussions with community and Veterans groups in Boston, Cleveland, Honolulu, Flint, San Francisco, Central New Jersey and Washington, DC have taken place and are in various stages of development. Groups in Los Angeles and South Texas are also being explored. A primary determinant of where we go next will be the availability of funding sources for each location.
- Identify and pursue local, regional and national funding sources and establish contact. Proposals have been prepared for foundations based in Cleveland and Flint. Federal grant programs in DOL and DHHS may also fit neatly with this

program. We are currently investigating a wide range of possible funding sources and will apply for as many grants as possible to expand the program as rapidly as possible.

Appendix D

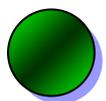
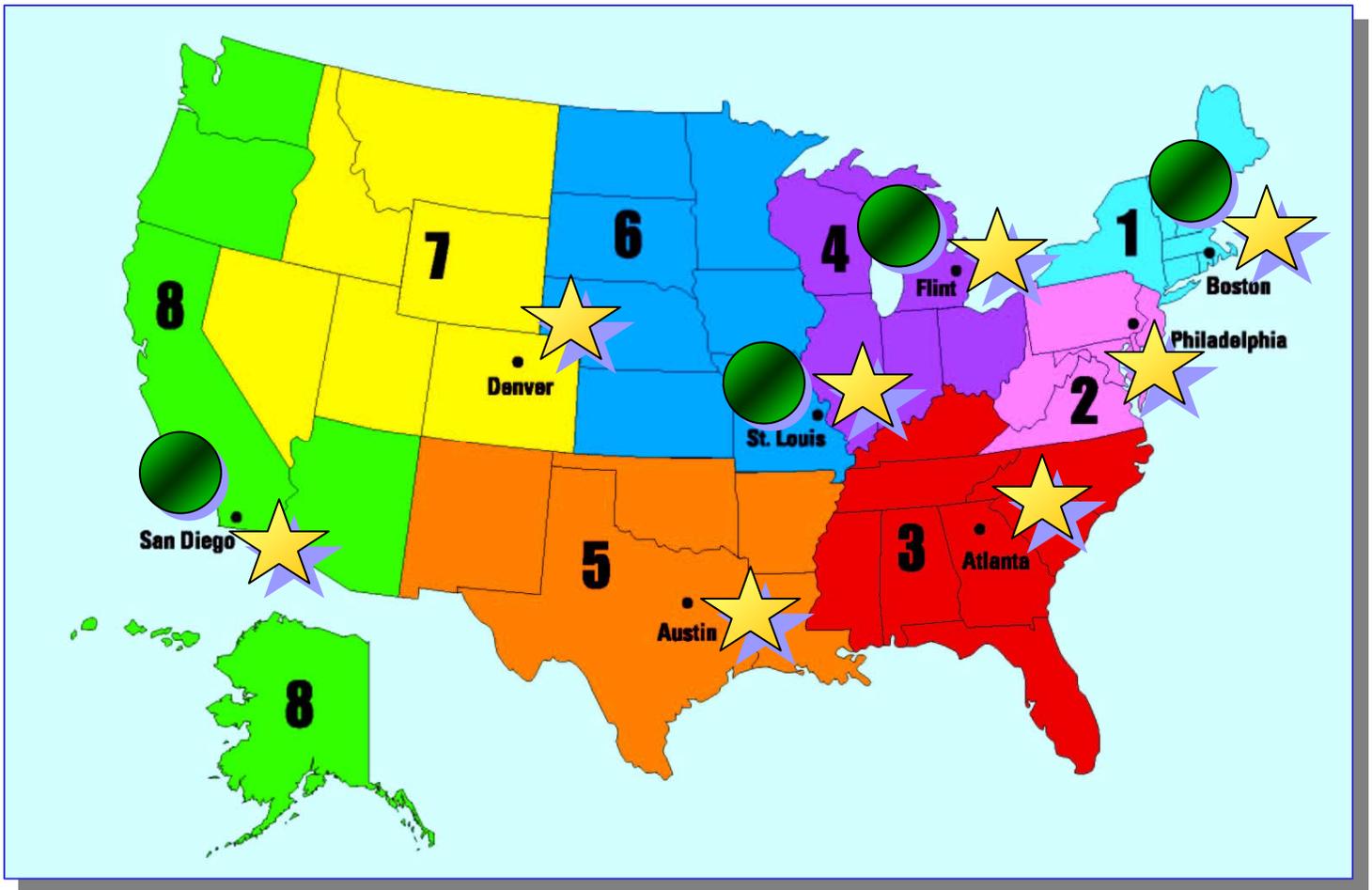
Data on Goals and Activities of Eight Regional Education Hubs

Education Goals for the 2005 Fiscal Year October 1, 2004-September 30, 2005									
	Region 1 Boston	Region 2 Philadelphia	Region 3 Atlanta	Region 4 Flint	Region 5 Austin	Region 6 St. Louis	Region 7 Denver	Region 8 San Diego	Total
Traditional Courses	150	250	250	100	510	100	115	150	1625
Innovative Vet Modules	600	150	150	200	510	200	60	150	2020
Events/ Seminars	750	800	200	500	1,390	400	1,715	150	5905
Mentoring/ Counseling	800	900	500	200	50	350	400	550	3750
On Line	200	100	50	25	100	50	50	25	600
Total	2500	2200	1150	1025	2560	1100	2340	1025	13900
Education Activities for the 2005 Fiscal Year (New Program Begins April 1, 2005)									
	Region 1 Boston	Region 2 Philadelphia	Region 3 Atlanta	Region 4 Flint	Region 5 Austin	Region 6 St. Louis	Region 7 Denver	Region 8 San Diego	Total
Traditional Courses	133	122	604	47	14	17	1097	51	2085
Innovative Vet Modules	192	26							218
Events/ Seminars			10		11				21
Mentoring/ Counseling			506			187	451	52	1196
On Line									

Total	325	148	1120	47	25	204	1548	103	3520
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Appendix E

TVC Regional Centers and Hubs



Veterans Business Resource



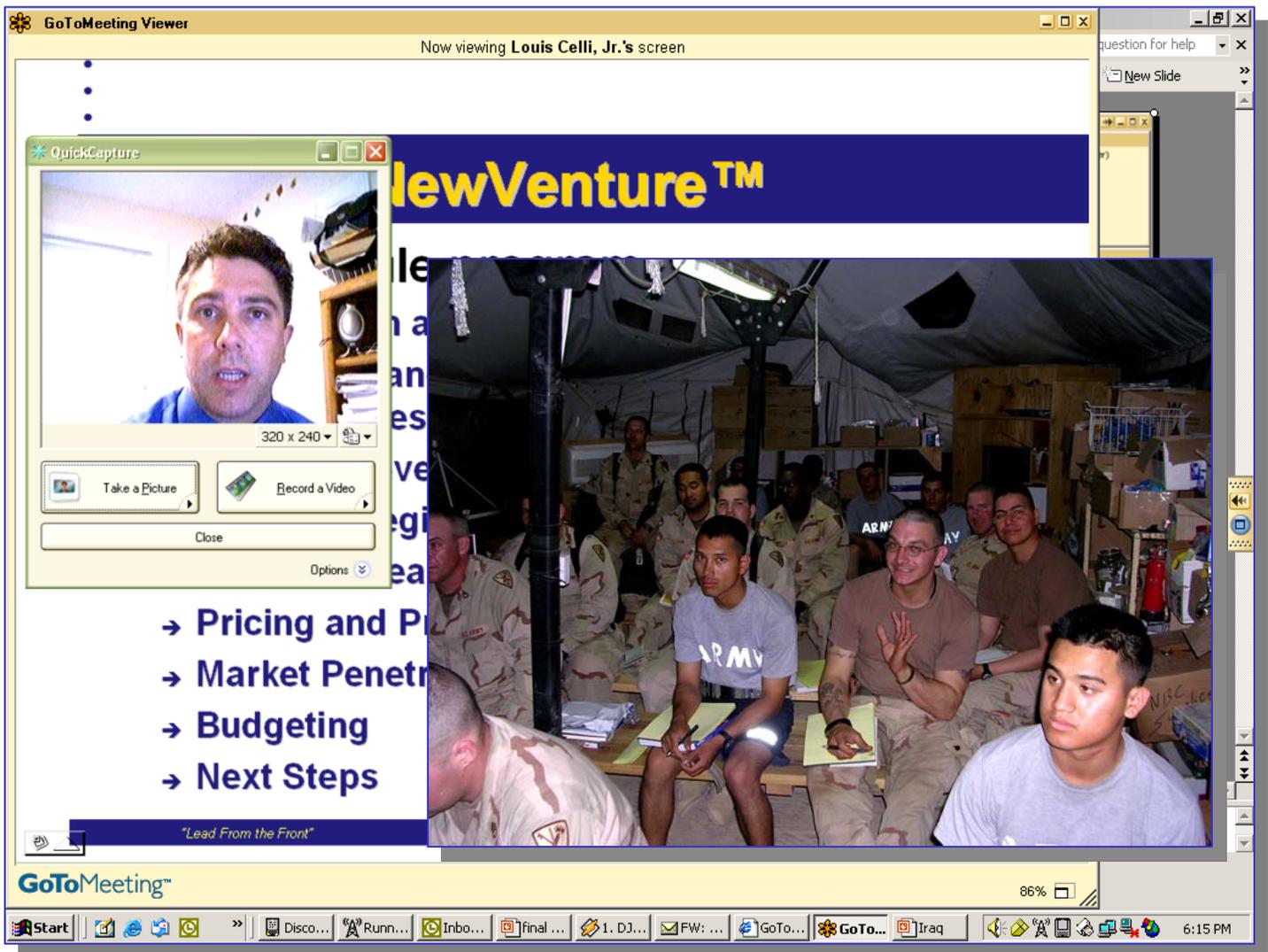
Regional Education Hubs

Appendix F

Visuals from the Presentation

Northeast Veterans Business Resource Center VBRC (Boston to Iraq)





GoToMeeting Viewer

Now viewing **Louis Celli, Jr.'s** screen

FastTrac NewVenture™

- **Nine-module program**
 - Introduction and Entrepreneurial Profiles
 - Identifying and Assessing Venture Opportunities
 - Concept Development
 - Entry Strategies
 - Market Research and Analysis
 - Pricing and Profitability
 - Market Penetration
 - Budgeting
 - Next Steps

"Lead From the Front"

GoToMeeting™

File View Tools Help

Attendee List 8 Attendees

- **Louis Celli, Jr.** (Organizer, Presenter)
- Ann Bailey
- Domain Administrator
- Judith Gillespie
- Patrick Heavey
- Richard Guzowski SFC
- Roger Horn
- walter blackwell (Me)

Chat

walter blackwell(to Louis Celli, Jr.): You go Louis!

Patrick Heavey(Private): Hi Walt!

walter blackwell(to Louis Celli, Jr.): You are really quick on the draw brother Pat

walter blackwell(to Patrick Heavey): You are really quick on the draw brother Pat

Patrick Heavey(Private): You betcha ..

To: Presenter Only

Send

Meeting Info

Meeting ID# 762-155-956

Hi All,

Tonight is the first online class. Here is the log in info for you to watch or participate should you wish.

GoToMeeting™

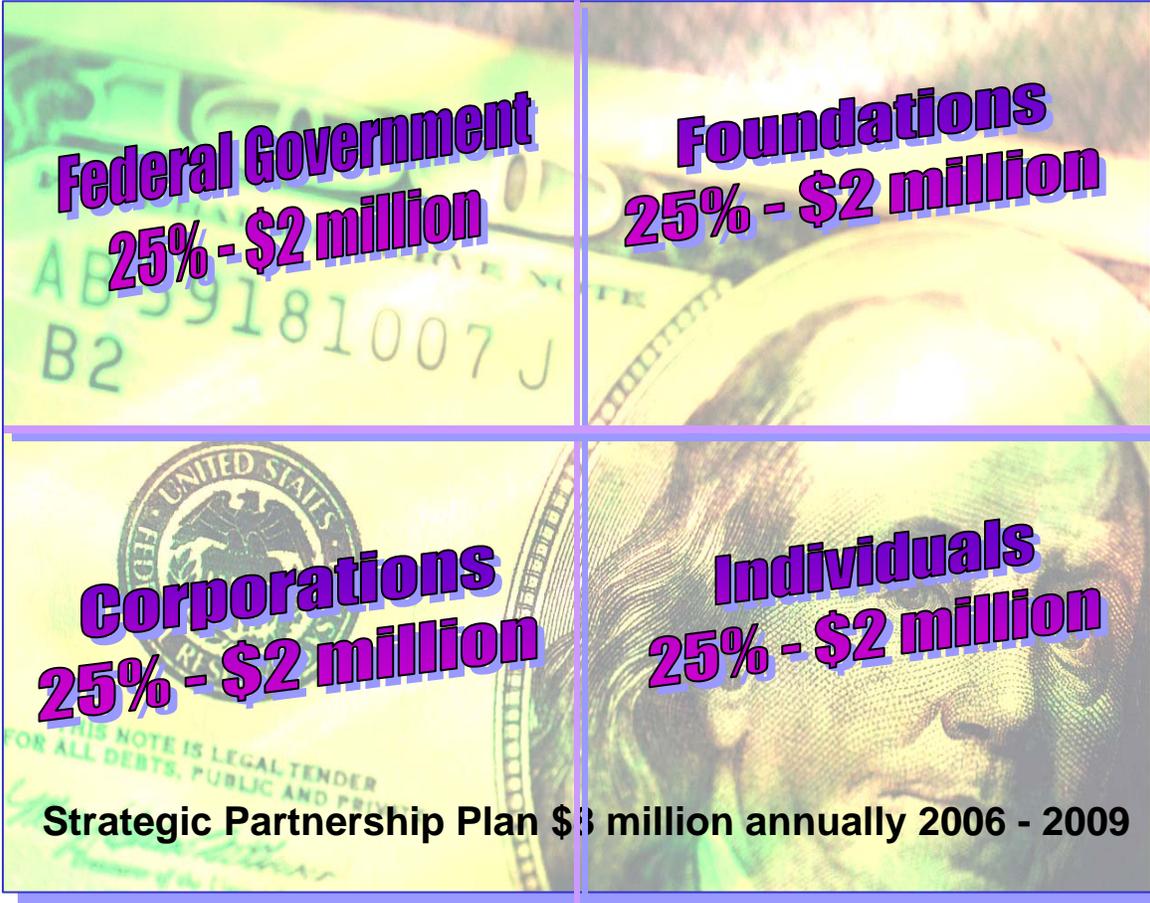
Start | Disco... | Runn... | Inbo... | final ... | 1. DJ... | FW: ... | GoTo... | GoTo... | Pres... | 6:12 PM

E-learning Pilot: *Veteran Access to the American Dream*









Appendix G

Month	Special Client Groups			Sex		Ethnicity			
	Service-Disabled	Other Disabled	Guard/Reserve	Male	Female	Black	White	Indian	Hispanic
Jun 04	4	9	1	27	3	13	15	1	1
Jul	4	6	2	20	1	13	7	1	0
Aug	0	0	0	8	0	5	3	0	0
Sep	6	0	2	12	3	9	5	1	0
Oct	2	3	0	5	0	3	1	1	0
Nov	4	2	1	7	1	4	4	0	0
Dec	3	2	1	13	0	8	5	0	0
Jan 05	7	5	2	15	2	7	10	0	0
Feb	5	6	0	10	1	3	8	0	0
Mar	1	1	0	8	0	4	4	0	0
Apr	0	0	0	6	1	4	3	0	0
Total YTD	36	34	9	131	12	73	65	4	1
% of Total	45.60%	43.00%	11.40%	91.60%	8.40%	51.00%	45.50%	9.30%	0.70%

Data from St. Louis Veterans Business Resource Center

Month	Fast Trac Report		
	Fast Trac Referred	Missouri Fast Trac Classes	No Shows
Jun 04	17		7
Jul	14		7
Aug	6		4
Sep	6	15	1
Oct	0		0
Nov	4		3
Dec	2		0
Jan 05	8		3
Feb	5	12	0
Mar	3		2
Apr	3		1
Total YTD	68	27	28

Month	Client Services			Type of Business		Brought to the Center by...				
	Follow-up Visit	Email Assistance	New Clients	New	Established	TV	Radio	Word of Mouth	Referral	Other
Jun 04		11	30	25	5	18	3	8	1	1
Jul	2	19	21	19	2	5	3	2	7	11
Aug	6	9	8	7	1	3	0	2	2	3
Sep	16	15	15	5	10	1	3	5	5	1
Oct	25	15	5	4	1	0	0	4	0	1
Nov	19	17	8	7	1	0	0	3	1	4
Dec	18	40	13	10	3	0	0	7	4	2
Jan 05	25	38	17	12	5	1	2	7	5	3
Feb	19	45	11	7	4	0	1	1	8	1
Mar	38	31	8	5	3	0	0	1	4	3
Apr	28	18	7	3	4	0	0	3	4	0
Total YTD	196	258	143	104	39	28	12	43	41	30
% of Total	32.80%	43.20%	24.00%	72.70%	27.30%	18.20%	7.80%	27.90%	26.60%	19.50%