

Jobs for Veterans State Grant Summary

The **KANSASWorks** Workforce Center programs, strive to meet the employment needs of all veterans. Despite all job center employment service representatives not being veteran representatives, the Vets program is staffed by 24 military veterans and employment professionals, located throughout the state of Kansas. The JVSG staff provides specialized intensive services that aid veterans with overcoming the extreme barriers that are preventing them from gaining meaningful employment.

Those veterans who seek services at the **KANSASWorks** Workforce Center receive Priority of Service. Priority of Service simply means that veterans receive priority and first available access to resources/ services/ trainings/ and funding opportunities, for services funded (in full or in part) by the US Department of Labor. Additionally, registered veterans receive job announcements and job email alerts, 48 hours prior to the general population, allowing them to apply before everyone else and ultimately having their resumes and applications reviewed first, by employers.

Other programs and services available through the Workforce System include the KANVET program. KANVET is a coalition of state agencies, brought together by Governor Brownback, to create a virtual one stop shop of Kansas benefits and resources, for veterans seeking resources to meet their employment and education needs. KANVET is an easily accessible website that allows Veterans to locate what they are seeking, in just three clicks of the mouse. Employers are also encouraged to log on to the website and to take the Pledge to Hire Veterans. Those who do are contacted by a Veteran Representative and assisted in posting jobs and locating potential veteran candidates, to fill their vacancy needs.

In addition to the above program, the Kansas Department of Commerce has recently negotiated with the Hilton Hotel, and will be participating in the Hilton Honors program. This program allows veterans, who are required to travel for a job interview or to participate in employment training, to stay at a Hilton Hotel of their choice, for free. As we aim to provide qualified veterans to fill the many vacancies, located in western Kansas, this program will be very beneficial to those living in eastern Kansas, and those who are considering moving to western Kansas for employment opportunities.

With the US Army anticipating a military drawdown of approximately 16,000 soldiers, we anticipate an increase of need in our services. Currently, we do not know how many of those affected by this drawdown will come from our three military facilities (Fort Leavenworth, Fort Riley, McConnell Air Force Base). Additionally, these military facilities anticipate approximately 5,700 soldiers to exit/ retire from Kansas' military facilities, in 2015. In an effort to make this transition as seamless as possible, the Workforce System and the JVSG program have placed staff on the front-lines, at the Forts/ Base, to help soldiers prepare for their discharge from the military. These soldiers receive the same services that are listed above, however in a location closer to them.

The state of Kansas veteran unemployment rate hovers between approximately 4.8 and 5.5 percent. The Department of Commerce *Entered Employment Rate* is approximately 70%. The Department of Commerce is working diligently in leveraging our partnership with Kansas' businesses, encouraging them to higher veterans and is working to provide quality customer service and care to our soldiers, with the end goals of producing the best veteran candidates to our businesses and connecting our qualified veterans to long-term, meaningful and gainful employment.