U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON

VETERANS SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2019
1:00 P.M.

Recorded by: Jennifer Metcalf Razzino, CER
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Public Meeting
Interagency Task Force on Veterans Small Business Development 3/6/2019

PROCEEDINGS
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(Meeting called to order, 1:04 p.m.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: We’re going to get started. Okay, this is Larry Stubblefield, Associate Administrator of the Office of Veterans Business Development, and I’m going to open the meeting with a roll call. I guess we’ll start over here to my left with Beth.

MS. TORRES: Hi, I’m Beth Torres from the Department of Veterans Affairs OSDBU.

MR. GREEN: Tim Green. I’m from the Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service.

MR. GAVINO: Hi. This is Amando Gavino from GSA. I’m the Director for IT services.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, do we have any members on the line, on the call?

MR. PHIPPS: Mike Phipps is on the line. I know my membership is in process right now, but just -- I’m here.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, Mike. Thanks for joining us, as always.

MR. SHERWOOD: This is Matt Sherwood from the Michigan VBOC.
MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, anyone else on the --

MS. MITCHELL-WHISNANT: This is Mary Ellen Mitchell-Whisnant from the Department of the Treasury.

MS. ARTIS-SAYLES: This is Laurie Sayles. I’m a committee member with VetForce.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, do we have anyone else on the call?

(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, if not, we will begin the meeting.

You’ll have to come up to the table and turn the mic on.

MS. LEWIS: Teresa Lewis representing Joe Sharpe for the American Legion.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, I think you all have copies of the agenda in front of you, and so with that, we’ll get started with the meeting. Thank you all for being here, and for all of you on the phone, and for our guests in the room. It’s always a pleasure seeing Barbara Ashe. Thank you for VIP for being here today.

So we’ll start with OVBD updates. And the first thing I want to talk about, and at any point if there’s any questions or comments, feel free to chime in, but I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the things going on in our office right now. We’re heavily
engaged in the FY19, the NDAA, the TAP assistance program. And there’s some major changes to TAP, and it’s listed here on the slides. The one -- the big thing for us in OVBD is that TAP -- or the Boots to Business, as the slide indicates, is going to be now a part of the core training, and it’s going to be transitioning service members. It’s mandatory now that they pick between an education, employment, or entrepreneurial track, whereas before it was optional, and I’ll talk about that a little bit more in the presentation.

Now, on the second bullet there, it talks about the impact, and for us in OVBD, and particularly our VBOC director, we’re looking at what this -- the changes in the NDAA, the impact it’s going to have on the VBOCs. In other words, with Boots to Business now being a core part of the curriculum, we’re looking at an estimated 25 percent increase in classes, number of classes that we’re going to have. And that’s going to -- that’s going to really tap into our VBOC members, if you will, because the VBOC, in addition to teaching the Boots to Business, they also have a responsibility to the entrepreneurial community for training and counseling.

So we’re anticipating maybe a dip somewhat, if
you will, in the amount of training and counseling we can do, be able to provide, but having said that, we’re still thinking through how we’re going to do this, to include bringing on our resource partners to help more and so forth.

And then that third bullet there just says that the NDAA changes, they’re all -- they go into effect 1 October. So come 1 October this year, the FY19 NDAA changes will be in effect.

Now, I actually borrowed this slide from our Department of Labor, you know, Ivan Denton shared it with me, but this is -- the title of the slide talks about the primary driver for change. And there’s a really big emphasis now on taking care of service members and their families when they transition from the military, and not just transitioning service members, but veterans, period.

I think you may have seen the President put something out earlier this week talking about the high rate of suicide within the veteran community, and this need to help -- you know, help transitioning service members who ultimately become veterans, you know, transition better into civilian life. So in that executive order that the President put out, you know, there is -- he put together a task force now that’s
going to look at ways to help service members.

And so what we’re doing with the Transition Assistance Program is definitely a way to help service members as they transition from the military. But if you look at the slide, you know, it talks about the medium annual wages for these various groups. So if you look at high school degree or high school diploma, rather, self-employed, bachelor’s, all the way up to apprenticeship, you know, the need to get service members focused and into some type of track that’s going to lead to career-readiness status is what we’re focused on.

On the next slide, this just talks about the current TAP sequence of events, and if you notice that under the mandatory core curriculum, there’s five days in the week. The Department of Defense had one day. The slide talks about what occurred in that -- in DOD’s one day, you know, talking about the transition overview, talking about being resilient. There is military occupational crosswalk, and then the personal finance planning, and so forth.

And then the Department of Labor actually had three days. And so you can see the -- what they offered for those three days. And then VA had one day to talk about benefits. And as I mentioned earlier,
the optional tracks, you know, were from Department of Labor, SBA, and Education -- or, I’m sorry, VA. And then the Capstone event, which was 90 days out.

The next slide just talks about the legislative proposals or the changes. If you’ll notice, just if you look across the slide, everything that’s in parentheses is actually now in legislation. So the counseling pathways, that’s each service secretary is responsible for developing those pathways. That’s 365 days out. That’s when separation counseling will begin.

Each transitioning service member is now required to meet with a counselor, in person or by video. And then here’s a big one. The service secretaries, this thing about establishing three pathways, it’s the service secretaries in conjunction with Department of Labor and VA, will develop three pathways for transitioning service members.

And the bottom line is we’re talking about, you know, high, medium, and low risk, you know, low risk being maybe the colonel who’s transitioning out who, you know, has a master’s degree, he knows where he or she is going to work. Low risk being maybe -- and low risk could run the whole spectrum, but I’m just going to simplify. It could be the young person that
came in, only stayed, you know, three years, they’re going out, they don’t have much of an education and they’re not really look -- not really sure what they’re going to do after they transition out.

So the service secretaries are working on establishing those three pathways, and then that next point there, the service members will be required to take a self-assessment. And that self-assessment, again, is still being developed, but it’s going to be the determining factor to -- for commanders to be able to figure out what pathway that person should be in.

So now we’re talking about what is your grade, what is your MOS, you know, what is your education level, do you know what you’re going to do when you leave the service and so forth.

So five-day mandatory core curriculum, like I mentioned. Our Boots to Business, entrepreneurship, is now part of the core, if you look on the slide. The big difference is Department of Labor had three days before; now it’s one day. And then under the mandatory curriculum -- or, I’m sorry, the electives -- former electives that are now mandatory as part of the core curriculum, you can see there DOL has employment. There’s also vocational training and the higher education track, and then we’re there, as I indicated
earlier, with our Boots to Business.

And then VA will have one day to talk through benefits and then the Capstone event, where the commanders are going to say whether or not the transitioning service member is career-readiness -- have met career-readiness standards or not. And then this is also going to be continued over, that warm handoff to the American job centers, and I think those are under the Department of Labor for folks who need that additional help in terms of transitioning.

So are there any questions so far or any comments on any of this?

MR. GREEN: Yeah, this is Tim Green from Department of Labor. Larry laid it our perfectly, but at Department of Labor, really what we’re focusing on is encouraging starting earlier.

And then that self-assessment really is going to be key because according to the Chamber of Commerce, over 61 percent of veterans -- or service members transitioning don’t know what they want to do when they get out, me including one of them after a 28-year career, so that self -- because it’s really hard to pick a track unless you know what track you want to pick. So that’s going to be critical, I think, to making this work effectively and getting them in the
right -- guiding down the thing.

And one of the concerns we have, if you have a high-school-only degree, even if you’re not inclined to go to school, you know, get in an apprenticeship program, get extra credentials to boost up to family-sustaining wages and -- but everything Larry said was spot-on with the way the program’s going from a Department of Labor perspective.

The one benefit Department of Labor has is we did get some extra funding to execute our portion of this, and I don’t -- I’m not sure if Small Business did or not, but it’s going to be a challenge for them, and they’re going to be needing help for that. So thank you.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: You know, I was wondering, too, can you comment on the job center, American Job Center piece?

MR. GREEN: Yeah, for warm handovers, it’s always been the intent that if they don’t meet career-readiness standards then they would connect them with the American Job Center for employment services after they get out because you can’t really stop a service member from separating, but you can make them -- you can connect them to the resources that are available in the community. So we’re going to try to do a better
job of not only connecting but tracking. We haven’t
done a good job of -- we connect them, we give them the
contact information, but we haven’t been really
following up on are they actually utilizing those
services and what are the outcomes.

So we’re really digging hard into -- as part
of this whole effort is making sure we’re tracking not
only outcomes but wage data and, you know, where
they’re -- how those MOSs are doing when they separate
so we can help steer them better. But we’re going to
use the state workforce agencies to help us with that.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right, thank you very
much. On the next slide, we just talk about SBA
follow-on assistance after TAPS. So say, for example,
you’d like to go to Boots to Business, and the question
I’m always asked, whether it’s from, you know, members
on the Hill, staffers and so forth, is, well, what’s
next after Boots to Business. So this slide just talks
in terms of what follow-on resources that we have.

So here we’re talking about follow-on
training. We have two online courses -- one with
Mississippi State University; the other with the
Institute for Veterans and Military Families. Those
courses are online and are generally a step, if you
will, above the basics that you would get in Boots to
Business. Mississippi State University, that online
course, at the end of it, it results in the participant
having his or her business plan, which -- to go into
business, you know, every successful businessperson has
a business plan.

So the slide here just talks about some of the
other resource partners, whether it’s Small Business
Development Center, SCORE, women business centers, or
our 22 VBOCs located around the country, Veteran
Business Outreach Centers. These are other areas where
service members who have taken Boots to Business
transitioning out of the military we will refer them to
for that additional support.

And then the client services, like I had
mentioned, the business plan, there’s funding programs,
federal contracting, and so forth. And then some of
our veteran entrepreneurship training programs, to
include the Veteran Institute for Procurement. Like I
said earlier, we have Barbara Ashe here, and she runs
that very well, nationally known program.

All right, the next slide just talks about
some of the engagements that’s on the calendar,
upcoming if you will. The IGNITE conference, that’s
IVMF. The VETS-19 conference will be down in San
Antonio in May. And that’s the National Veteran
Business -- Small Business Coalition Group that will be running that. V-WISE, that’s also IVMF, will be in Atlanta in May. And then those are Hiring Our Hero events that are on the -- upcoming as well.

Any questions on any of the outreach events?

(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, if you go to the next slide, it’s just a contact piece. I will tell you that yesterday Stan Kurtz and I got a chance to go over to the White House and meet with the Second Lady, Mrs. Pence’s staff, to talk about what we do in OVBD. It was a very productive meeting. The bottom line is the Second Lady wants to be involved. She wants to meet, get out into the public sector, if you will, and meet military spouses who own -- who are business owners.

And she also wants to publicize what we do because, like in SBA, I mean, we have a wealth of resources, and in a lot of cases, like I’ll give you an example, I had someone call me here recently and they are a business owner, and they wanted to know if SBA could fund a participant in their program to help them with procurement. So our thing was, well, why would -- first of all, we don’t have a program to do that, but why would we -- if we did, why would we spend $3,000 to get this person there when we could have them go to
VIP?

So people don’t know, you know, everything that we have in SBA, and the Second Lady graciously has agreed to get out and kind of talk about what it is we do. So when she travels around the country, she’ll probably stop at our Veteran Business Outreach Centers or district offices. And she wants — again, like I said, she wants to meet military spouses that are entrepreneurs. She’s very big on the military, and that’s a good thing.

All right. Are there any questions about anything that I’ve brought up or discussed at this point?

(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: If not, I believe we’re --


You said that the Second Lady wants to meet the spouses. Is she interested in meeting the veterans as well?

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Veteran -- we talked about all of our programs. Our programs are for veterans and military spouses. Yes, she’s interested in the veterans but also the military spouses as well, yeah.

MR. KURTZ: I’m Stan Kurtz. I’m now the Director of Policy Engagement. So as Larry said, we
both went over there, and to answer your question, we talked a lot about employment, and so the Department of Labor vets, we talked about them and our collaboration. And we talked a lot about these committees and our collaboration with just you and the House and how we collaborate on services to veterans, military spouses, and National Guardsmen and Reserves.

So there’s a lot of interest going back and forth about not just military spouses but what are we doing in the community, working together to get out to the events, to know about the events and get it -- and really marketing the services for veterans and military spouses and National Guard.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right. Thanks, Stan.

Okay, right now, we’re scheduled to have Cap Access here, but we’re waiting for them to come. And in the meantime, we’re going to just fast forward on the agenda and go over to GSA.

MR. GAVINO: Okay, good afternoon again, everyone. This is Amando Gavino, and I’m -- I work in GSA and I’m the Director for IT Services. What I do is basically I manage the contracts that’s pretty big in IT for GSA such as the big business ones called Alliance, Alliant II, small business, the Alliant II small business, VETS 2, 8(a) STARS, smalls, under my
purview. So it is my shameless plug for a contract --
follow-on contract for the original VETS contract, so
this is a really quick update on VETS 2 that we have
going. So next slide, please.

Okay, VETS 2 contract’s successes. The
initial VETS 2 contract went live in February 2018. As
of today, right now, there’s roughly about $200 million
as of today. We have several active RFQs, about half a
dozen. The initial VETS contract was about 2.1
billion. It is a five-year with five-year -- with five
one-year options. Initially, VETS was -- VA was the
largest user until they started the OMAC (phonetic), a
T4 contract. So now it’s pretty much everyone.

In VETS 2, there are roughly about 70 vendors
currently. It does have an on-ramp option, and the
average for an opportunity for VETS 2 is about 3.5.
Next slide, please.

Briefly show the top ten -- the top agencies
that include -- uses our VETS contract, and our -- what
we call our targeted customers. So I have people from
Kansas, San Diego that targets those -- those agencies
to encourage them to use our VETS 2 contract. Next
slide.

Very, very, real quick, stating the obvious
here, SDVOSB set-aside, it is an IDIQ. As I said
before, 70 contracts, single-scope, very IT focused, and the ceiling’s about $5 million. The whole spectrum of this contract is IT, once again. Next slide.

The base period was -- it started in February of 2018. As I said before, it is five years. The option period will end in February of 2028. And this is the only types that exist for VETS 2, the one below -- fixed price, cost reimbursement, labor hour, and time and material contract.

Pretty much everything that we manage in my office are best-in-class. This is no different. VETS 2 is a best-in-class contract. You get SDVOSB credit. It has standardized IT labor categories. Currently, there are 31 labor categories in VETS 2, and what I mean by that is, for example, software developing, IT security. If it’s IT-focused, we can do it in VETS 2.

Again, the fact that it is a small business set-aside is something that we like to say over and over again. And it is full of highly qualified contractors. Overall, worldwide geographic coverage. We -- if, for example, you have the State Department, you would like to use some local contractors in that particular region or that country, we can -- VETS 2 contract primes can support that request as well. Obviously, they have to go through some security
clearance that needs to be accomplished, but it can be
done, it has been done, in VETS. So VETS 2 can do the
same thing.

This slide here just talks about the security
clearance that we have currently in the contract. The
majority of the facilities at least are secret-
clearance-cleared. Most do have top secret facilities,
though it’s not necessarily a requirement to keep
secret as part of the award, and I know that might be
contradictory, but the bottom line here is the majority
of the contractors do have the capability to do a top
secret facility type of clearance.

Just briefly talks about the scope of the
contract. As I said before, there’s 31 categories, and
this is some of the categories that I just briefly
mentioned earlier.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: So, you know, like Amando
said, this is a complete set-aside, right?

MR. GAVINO: Yes.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: For just veteran-owned
businesses.

MR. GAVINO: Yes.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay. All right.

MR. GAVINO: Yes, and we’re proud of it.

VETS 2 resources, that’s the website. That’s
the bottom line there. It has all those items as I listed above, the pricing, the subcontractors, a copy of contracts, examples, what -- and also ordering guide.

What we can do, the office can do a scope review assistance with the agencies. We can also assist in some level of market research, and we also do virtual training, DBA training for agencies and DOD.

Summary. It is basically -- it is a best-in-class contract. It’s available. Once again, if it’s IT-based requirement, VETS 2 contract can provide it. If there’s any question, the next page is the best place to get answers from.

Any questions? I know it was pretty quick.

MS. LEWIS: I have a couple of questions.

MS. GAVINO: Yes, ma’am.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: You have to --

MS. LEWIS: Okay, got it. Amando, Teresa Lewis. I’m with the American Legion, but I’m a former OSDBU director at a couple of federal agencies. And you have some of the agencies listed as target customers on Slide 3. Do you have -- what’s your strategy for reaching out to these agencies?

MR. GAVINO: This is Amando again. So, for example, for the top agencies included, we are -- in my
office, we are organized in a regional format. We have 11 regions, and what I try to do is basically I speak to our reps, GSA-wide. If there’s a new IT requirement out there based on business development that we get intel from, from our GSA, that’s how we target it. We go right after any RFIs, RFQs out there that we think when we do our initial review could be small business, we home into it and we talk to the regional business developer of that particular area.

MS. LEWIS: Okay. I was the OSDBU director, both at Treasury and HHS. Your reps that were responsible for the agencies, where I was assigned, they actually came in and gave a full presentation that was specific to my agency, respective agency. And it actually drove -- drilled down to the awards that were made and where they saw potential opportunities for these targeted customers.

Do you think that’s something that you guys could do and that would be helpful?

MR. GAVINO: Absolutely. Yes, absolutely. That’s no problem. And we would love to do that.

Any other questions out there?

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Are there any questions on the phone or comments?

MR. PHIPPS: Amando, this is Mike Phipps. I
just had a quick question about the 70 awardees. Are you guys going to have an on-ramping on VETS 2 to allow --

MR. GAVINO: Yes.

MR. PHIPPS: -- additionally qualified -- you are?

MR. GAVINO: Yeah.

MR. PHIPPS: All right.

MR. GAVINO: Actually, that’s a great question. I asked my folks that when can we start doing that. I don’t have an answer yet, but, yes, we -- it does have an on-ramp clause, but we would like to basically see what kind of activities we get before we make an official statement of when that might be and what are the grounds for on-ramping future vendors. But, yes, the answer is yes. There is a capability to do that.

MR. PHIPPS: Excellent.

MR. GAVINO: Any other questions?

(No response.)

MR. GAVINO: Thank you very much.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay. We are still waiting on Capital Access to come down, and so what we’re going to do if everyone here is in agreement, normally we go around the room and we just have the agency updates.
And so I guess I could start with Beth Torres and the VA.

MS. TORRES: Hi, I’m Beth Torres from VA. I’m representing our brand new OSDBU Director, Ruby Harvey. Tom Leney has transitioned to become the Associate Executive Director of the Strategic Acquisition Center in Fredericksburg, Virginia. So Ruby was formerly the Chancellor of the VA Acquisition Academy, so she’s very well qualified, very bright, and she sends her regrets that she wasn’t able to be here today.

We have just a few things to update. One of the things that our communications group has been working on is we’ve updated our website as far as training goes for veteran-owned small businesses. We’ve consolidated it all into one page with very nice links where you can click on one thing and it takes you to all the VA-produced trainings and click on another link and it takes you to where we’ve consolidated all the GSA training, the SBA training, and anything else that we’ve received from other -- that we’ve found from other agencies. And that’s all the how to do business with VA and how to do business with the Government and how to make yourself procurement-ready and starting businesses and all the wonderful training that already exists.
Now, we’re getting ready to launch something else that’s really pretty exciting. We’re very excited about it. We’re creating several modules on basically, okay, now you’ve won a contract, now what’s next? So these are going to be interactive training modules. We’re -- they’re in support of the Small Business Act Section 15(k)19, basically as a requirement for OSDBU to help small businesses that get contracts learn what to do to stay compliant and to be good with the contract and be successful.

So those are going to be piloted at the end of the month and hopefully launch site-wide very soon after that. Those are the big things that we have from VA. Does anyone have any questions?

MR. ZACCHEA: Beth, this is Mike Zacchea from the Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs from the UCONN EVB. What is the status of the strategic platform for CVE?

MS. TORRES: Right now, our VEMs platform is working as expected. We did have one short outage on Monday that was due to a VA nationwide problem that we had, but everything is back up and running beautifully right now. I’ve been interacting with it myself doing some cases myself, so I know it is working.

MR. ZACCHEA: Okay, so I got to tell you, I’ve
been contacted by several veteran-owned businesses in the last two weeks that have contradicted what you said, that it’s not working. One will be at the meeting tomorrow morning, too, to talk about his case on the record.

MS. TORRES: Okay.

MS. ASHE: Hi, Beth. I have a question. It’s Barbara Ashe. I was just wondering, have you decided on when the -- if you’re going to and if you are when you might have the veteran engagement conference this year? Do you have any update on that?

MS. TORRES: I have some preliminary information on that. I believe that we’re doing two events for this year, and I’m trying to think of the cities that tentatively we’re looking at. Nashville is one of them. And I can’t remember. There’s another -- I can’t remember the other one actually. We’re working on -- and those are going to be industry-specific, so we’re splitting it into two --

MS. ASHE: So that decision’s been made. No sense of a date yet, though?

MS. TORRES: I don’t know the details.

MS. ASHE: Do you have a sense of when? And the only reason why I am pressing, obviously, is that we don’t want to conflict, you know, our training --
MS. TORRES: Oh, sure, sure.

MS. ASHE: -- you know, and we work about 8 to 9 to 10 to 12 months out. So, you know, it’s --

MS. TORRES: All I can -- I can get back to you on that.

MS. ASHE: That would be -- yeah.

MS. TORRES: I can ask our folks to see if they -- what they have to release.

MS. ASHE: Okay, thank you.

MS. TORRES: Yes.

MR. WYNN: Good afternoon. My name is Joe Wynn with the Veterans Entrepreneurship Task Force. Beth, I was just wondering if you had an update on the numbers of verified veterans in the database now and how many have active contracts.

MS. TORRES: We have just shy of 15,000 in the database. As far as those that have active contracts right now, I can’t give you an exact number, but it is right around 3,000, though it’s -- you know, a lot of people are getting verified that don’t hold VA contracts. I think there are probably closer to about 6,000 government-wide.

MR. WYNN: Yeah, I saw a report just recently where those that do have contracts, 65 percent of them are doing quite well. So, I mean, that’s a good thing
I was going to ask something similar, too, to what Barbara Ashe asked about with regard to the conferences because there was so much, you know, emphasis put on last year about splitting the national conference into maybe three. And, again, we haven’t heard anything either about when the IT one or medical supplies or -- I mean, is that in -- is it in the planning process at all?

MS. TORRES: It is most definitely in the planning process. As far as exact dates or even -- I’m thinking it’s more towards fourth quarter that it will happen, but I don’t know exactly when and exactly how they’re going to be split out at this time. I know it’s going to be two separate events.

MR. WYNN: Yeah, let me -- and just one other thing. Who actually is managing that -- you know, organizing that now? Would that come under the new OSDBU, or is that under acquisitions or --

MS. TORRES: It does. No, no, it’s under Ruby Harvey.

MR. WYNN: Oh, okay. Thanks.

MS. PEREZ-WILHITE: This is Fran Perez-Wilhite with the ACVBA. The two industry-specific events that are coming up with the National Veteran Small Business
Engagement, are they definitely going to be IT and medical supplies?

MS. TORRES: Those are at least two of the industries. It’ll also encompass facility management, building, you know, architectural things, you know, that we’ve managed. And those -- that one will be held again with SAME.

MS. PEREZ-WILHITE: And are you or anyone from VA OSDBU going to be at our ACVBA meeting tomorrow?

MS. TORRES: That one I’m not sure. I know that I am not available, but I’m not sure whether Ruby or her deputy, Sharon Ridley, may be available.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right. Any other questions for VA?

MR. PHIPPS: This is Mike Phipps, just because I know Tom Leney has transitioned, we just don’t want to lose that open invitation to the VA. We really think it’s one of the most important agencies to show up at our ACVBA meeting tomorrow. So, Beth, if you could just get back with us and maybe even coordinate with Larry on who’s going to attend and making sure that they understand that there’s an open invitation to our committee, it’d be great.

MS. TORRES: Absolutely. Thank you for the invitation.
MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right. We will move over to the Department of Labor.

MR. GREEN: Okay, again, Tim Green, Department of Labor. I’ve got a couple updates. Next -- the 21st of March, the Bureau of Labor Statistics puts out a employment situation of veterans report. It’s released at 10:00 on the 21st of March this year. And that’s -- that includes all of the 2018 data we have, plus a supplemental survey that gets a little deeper into disabled veterans, Guard and Reserve questions, so that will be released.

The next day, I’m hosting a VSO meeting where we’ll let BLS brief that to that audience on the 22nd at 9:30. If anybody’s interested in attending, I’m sure we can find room for that.

So a couple of the statistics out of that, 2018, another great year for veterans as far as if you’re looking at just unemployment information or employment information. The unemployment rate in 2018 was 3.5 percent. It’s the lowest since 2000. For women veterans, it was 3.0 percent, and that’s the lowest since 1994 when we started capturing the data.

So really since the height of the recession back in around 2010, the unemployment rate has dropped from almost 9 percent down to 3.5 percent. And the
unemployment -- those actually unemployed at any one
time are about 320,000, which dropped from a rate that
was near a million not too long ago, so it’s all great
numbers in the report. You know, we also have more
work to do. In numbers, you have to take that with a
grain of salt because there’s still underemployment
issues out there.

There’s military spouse obviously has issues
that everybody’s interested in now, but generally if
you’re looking at trend data, it’s at the lowest point
it’s been in a long time, so whatever work this whole
group is doing, you know, continue to do that because
it is making an impact. Overall unemployment, you
know, the economy obviously has a lot to do with it, it
was at 3.8 percent. So good news across the front on
that.

As far as the Department of Labor, the
Secretary’s priorities, the top one for across all of
DOL is to increase the number of apprenticeship
programs. So we’re -- at the Department of Labor
itself, we have an Office of Apprenticeship that’s
working really hard on increasing the number of
apprenticeships. The Secretary is looking for a
million new apprenticeships. He just announced that at
the National Association of County Officials on Monday,
so he has a big push for increasing the number of apprenticeships, and that includes apprenticeships for veterans.

The priorities for the Department of Labor Veterans Employment Training Service, he really has three priorities this year for us. One is the TAP, Transition Assistance Program, getting that right for the NDAA and supporting the veterans and transitioning service members to the best of our ability. So we’re doing a lot of work with that and he’s putting some of the resources towards that to make effective training, and when we redo the curriculum, that’ll be all lined up.

He also is very heavily focused on the Hire Vets Medallion Program, which is an awards program for employers that hire and retain veterans. So with the application period for this year as open and it stays open until the end of April, where employers can go on to HireVets.Gov and apply for that DOL recognition, and that again until April 30th of this year. And the criteria are very well laid out on the website for that.

The other area is military spouse employment. We have talked about that. He’s got really three focuses within military spouses. One area is to hire
more. So the Department of Labor is going to be taking lead in trying to track the amount of military spouses we’re hiring, and the -- we’re really trying hard to encourage military spouses to apply at the Department of Labor and identify those jobs under the executive order back in 2018 to enhance noncompetitive Civil Service appointments of military spouses. So the authority there is there to hire military spouses and now we’re tracking, along -- across all Federal Government where we’re tracking and trying to encourage more military spouses.

One thing we’re doing, we’re going to all the military spouse hiring fairs, specifically that the Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring, and we’re going to be advertising federal jobs at those opportunities to get in front of the military spouses.

The other thing, we’re working with the Women’s Bureau from the Department of Labor, DOD, other agencies across the board. We’ll be working with all the agencies in the TAPS space to develop a TAP curriculum specific for military spouses, so something that’s a little more -- we’re looking both at the curriculum and the delivery of that because we’re finding out that military spouses can’t attend the five-day, nine-to-five-type workshop that’s developed
just for veterans. So we’re looking at doing a unique curriculum for military spouses that is more flexible to their needs, probably a lot of online flavor to it as well.

The other thing we’re doing is we have a -- we stood up a website on licensing and credentialing issues. So it’s -- basically it provides information on how to transfer military spouse credentials, licensures from one state to another. It includes a point of contact. It has information on the laws of each state that govern those certifications and licenses, and it also has a -- you know, what’s going on with compacts and that information. It has a state map you click on, like if you’re going from California to New Mexico, you can click on New Mexico and you can find out what it takes to transfer your license, and the best thing, it has a person you can call and get information on how to do that.

So those are a lot of the priorities. We just -- a couple other things. We also -- our advisory committee on veterans employment and training is -- we’ve got new membership. We just got approved, so we’re now seeing the members for that, and they’re going to have their first meeting sometime in April, and they’ll be talking about veterans employment
training and employer outreach issues. Eric Ebersole is the chairman of our committee. And then we’ll be announcing it through the Federal Registry Notice, all the meeting announcements.

And that’s about it for our update. Thanks, Larry.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right. Thank you. Any questions for Department of Labor?

MR. ZACCHEA: Yeah. Mike Zacchea again. On the list for the -- that you’re doing, I think you said it would be released March 24th and the event was March 25th. Is that right?

MR. GREEN: So the release is the 21st at 10:00.

MR. ZACCHEA: Okay.

MR. GREEN: You can go on BLS.gov to download the document. It’ll be -- don’t download it at 9:59. It has to be at 10:01. So at 10:01, they’ll release it, and you’ll be able to download the report itself. The next day, on the 22nd, is a Friday, at 9:30, we will have -- be having a VSO meeting. If you’d like to get invited, you can reach out to me, Tim Green. I can give you my email if that helps. It’s Green.Timothy.A@dol.gov, and I’ll get you an invite to hear -- BLS will go into more detail and answer any
questions you have.

MR. ZACCHEA: And how do you spell your last name, Green? Is that with two Es or three Es or --

MR. GREEN: There’s only two in the middle, no E on the end.

MR. ZACCHEA: Okay, so it’s Green.Timothy.A, as in alpha, @dol.gov?

MR. GREEN: Correct.

MR. ZACCHEA: Okay, thanks.

MR. GREEN: And that goes for anybody that might want to be invited. We can certainly open to a larger audience. Thank you.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, if there’s no further questions for Department of Labor, we will go to Department of Treasury. I believe you’re on the phone.

MR. MITCHELL-WHISNANT: Yes, hi. This is Mary Ellen Mitchell-Whisnant. I am the Acting Director of the Office of Small Business, Community Development and Housing Policy. I think in the past at these task force meetings you may have had Jodie Harris, who has since moved on to be the Director of the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund here at Treasury. I think Jeff Stout has participated in the past, who is the Director of the State Small Business Trade Initiative, which is a program that has since
sunsetted here at Treasury. But happy to be a part of the task force. I don’t have any updates for today, but please just let me know what you need from us. Thank you.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay. Any questions or comments for Treasury?

(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: I’ll just say we appreciate -- I guess we’re going to have a Treasury representative here tomorrow for the ACVBA, so we appreciate that support.

MS. MITCHELL-WHISNANT: Is that Jeff Merkowitz?

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Yes.

MS. MITCHELL-WHISNANT: Yes, so he’s with the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, so under Jodie Harris. He’s great, so I’m glad he’ll be able to be over there tomorrow to talk about the CDFI Fund with you all.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right. Thank you very much.

I guess, Amando, as GSA, do you have any further updates?

MR. GAVINO: I have nothing further to add.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, thank you.
Do we have anyone from Department of Defense?
(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: All right. OMB?
(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Student Veterans of America?
(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, well, that completes our member update reports. We have Capital Access here now, and I know we’re getting up to -- almost time for a break, but we’re going to push ahead because I know -- what, a 15-minute or so presentation? So thank you -- thank you both for being here.

MR. MILLER: Thank you, Larry. Hi, my name is John Miller. I’m the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Capital Access, and I’m joined here by my colleague, Dan Upham, who is our Acting Director for the Office of Capital Access Office of Economic Opportunity. Thank you.

As Deputy Associate Administrator, I work for the Associate Administrator, Bill Manger, and Bill Manger and I are responsible for leading the Office of Capital Access, and our mission in the Office of Capital Access is to make capital available to small businesses who would otherwise be unable to access
capital to start or expand a business through conventional means. And we do this through our capital access programs.

It’s important to know that when we talk capital access, and we will get into the lending numbers here shortly, SBA is not a direct lender. We don’t interact directly with the borrowers who -- or the applicants who come in to borrow money from the SBA. We provide financing through lending partners -- commercial lending partners -- through certified development companies and through nonprofit lending intermediaries.

And we don’t do this alone. We partner also within SBA through our extensive network of SBA district offices around the country, and our network partners located throughout the United States, including OVBDs, veterans business outreach centers. And through this vast network of VBOCs, SCORE, women’s business centers, and small business development centers, we’re able to provide free individual, face-to-face and internet counseling to small businesses and low-cost training to new entrepreneurs and established small businesses in over 1,800 locations throughout the United States and U.S. territories.

Now, to go through our programs, our 7(a)
lending program, as you can see on the slide above, these numbers are only for a very short time period. They are for the first quarter of the fiscal year, so October 1st of 2018 through December 31st of 2018, so a three-month period. 7(a) is SBA’s largest lending program. It’s our flagship business lending program for general business purposes. This program offers guarantees on loans to small business of up to $5 million that can be used for almost anything, including purchasing equipment, working capital, acquiring land, and purchasing and constructing a building. And there’s no minimum loan amount.

On loans up to 150,000, the SBA guarantees 85 percent of the value of the loan for the commercial lender. And for loans over 150,000, the guarantee is 75 percent. As you can see here, our lending in 2019 in the first quarter was down from the previous year in 2018. So, what, we had about a 12 percent drop in dollars lent during the first quarter. And the year-end numbers, just to put lending into perspective, year-end 2018, the 7(a) program had lent and guaranteed a total of $25 billion for total loans approved through the end of 2018.

Our 504 lending program is our second largest and was created for economic development, job creation,
and retention. And proceeds for the 504 loan program are for longer term loans for fixed assets including heavy equipment, purchase of buildings, or for construction. Loans are up to 5 million and up to 5.5 million for manufacturing concerns. These loans are made available through certified development companies, also known as CDCs, which are SBA’s community-based partners.

504 loans are typically structured with a commercial lender providing 50 percent of the costs of the project and the CDC providing the next 40 percent -- that’s SBA’s 504 loan -- and the borrower contributing the remaining 10 percent. The loan maturities are 10-, 20-, and 25-year maturities, all at fixed interest rates. And this program is popular right now because of a rising interest rate environment. Banks and borrowers are steering their client -- or banks and CDCs are steering their clientele towards this product because we can -- they can lock in at a fixed interest rate.

So as you can see from the charts, 504 was up during the first quarter by 10 percent. It’s now up around 5 percent, and the fiscal year-end ’18, SBA had approved $5 billion in 504 lending, which actually supported $11 billion in projects. Next slide.
Small loans, these are 7(a) now for more of the 7(a) program, which is a subset of the first slide for 7(a). Small loans were down 22 percent in the first quarter of the fiscal year. They are not down this much now. It’s hard to draw conclusions from just three months of data, and there is some seasonality to small and larger loans as well.

Loans from 150,000 to 350,000 were down just 4 percent in the first quarter of the year. And then, finally, loans approved to veterans as of December 31st were down 15 percent from the previous year. We also note that the increase while you can see during the first three months of the year, there’s been a lot of variability since 2014 in the various up-and-down years in veteran lending.

I’m now going to turn it over to Dan Upham to talk about the microloan and Community Advantage program.

MR. UPHAM: Thanks. Yeah, my name is Dan Upham, and I’m the Acting Director for the Office of Economic Opportunity. So I manage the microloan program, Community Advantage, PRIME Grants, and our intermediary lending pilot program. And just -- you know, this was another subset of cap access’ lending programs. These programs are differentiated and set
aside into this office because they are mission-focused, meaning they are operated through intermediaries and lending partners that are primarily nonprofit lenders whose mission it is to provide lending capital, training, technical assistance, services to underserved communities, including veteran-owned businesses.

And these are also smaller-dollar loan programs. The microloan program offers lending through nonprofit intermediaries. Those business loans that the intermediaries make cap out at $50,000, so very small-dollar loans. Within the microloan program, those intermediaries are also required to provide free training and technical assistance to their small business borrowers and perspective borrowers.

And as we sort of climb the ladder of economic opportunity, in our lending programs, so we start with the microloan program with loans up to 50,000. Community Advantage is sort of the next rung on that ladder of opportunity, if you will, and that program caps out at loans of $250,000. Again, this program is offered by primarily nonprofit, you know, economic development organizations. Many of our microloan intermediaries also participate in Community Advantage. Some may also participate as CDCs in the 504 program.
Some may also be CDFIs with Treasury and so forth, but with the ultimate goal of providing loan capital and training and technical assistance to underserved small businesses.

So just with that background, taking a quick look at our slide for the lending activity through December, lending activity for the microloan program is up. It was up last year. We actually had a record — record production year in terms of number of loans as well as dollars lent in the program. And that program is seeing continued growth so far in Fiscal 2019.

Community Advantage saw some — I think some growth last year, although it wasn’t terribly significant, and it’s slightly down this year, but as John mentioned, it’s hard to draw a lot of conclusions just looking at the first quarter’s numbers. Next slide, please.

And so this is a further breakdown of the underserved markets that are being impacted through the microloan program. The chart shows figures for each of the fiscal years through the first quarter of each fiscal year, through December 31. And so you can see for minority lending in microloans, it’s up significantly over where it was this time last year in 2018. The loans that are being made to primarily
women-owned businesses are slightly down. And the loans being made to veteran-owned businesses are down as well in the first quarter.

I am happy to report that while we haven’t updated the slide through today’s date, I did run a report before I came down here just to sort of get an update on where we are in micro, and we are now at 3 percent to veterans in terms of the number of loans made, and we are at 4.76 percent in terms of the dollars lent to veterans so far this year. So it does look like the first quarter information might be undervaluing sort of where we may expect to be for the year in terms of our veteran lending. Next slide.

Do you want to take back over?

MR. MILLER: Sure.

MR. UPHAM: Okay.

MR. MILLER: So as far as SBA has had the opportunity to provide fee relief in certain areas since 2015, I believe, because our programs -- our 7(a) and 504 programs do operate at zero subsidy, meaning the fees generated from the program cover the losses in the loan programs themselves. And that is a requirement that SBA remain at zero subsidy, and so as long as we have negative subsidy, which means we have more fees and recoveries in the program than losses, we
are able to return some of that money in the form of
due relief. And so what we’ve done in years past is
we’ve been able to provide due relief, not only to
veterans, which is statutorily mandated on SBA express
loans, with the caveat “as long as the programs remain
zero subsidy.” And we’ve been able to do that.

So this year, in 2019, we are offering -- we
are able to offer veteran-owned due relief where the
borrowers pay no due for SBA-guaranteed loans on all
SBA express loans. And those are loans -- 7(a) loans
of up to $350,000. In addition, because there is
additional subsidy due relief available, SBA has also
extended for non-express loans of loans up to $150,000
that are in rural and HUBZone areas, some due relief to
the borrower, which is reduced from the 2 percent
guarantee due to 0.667. And we have also provided some
lender due relief to reduce the due from .55 to 0.

Now, you might ask why is SBA offering lender
due relief, and the answer is lenders in some cases for
small loans need an incentive to provide smaller loans.
And these are the loans that reach the most
underserved, are smaller loans. And because of the
administrative costs of generating a loan for a small
loan are not much larger than they are for a large
loan, lenders are sometimes reticent to provide smaller
loans. So in order to incent lenders to provide smaller loans, we also have to provide the fees that they pay for the guarantee. We have to provide an incentive for them to make those small-dollar loans. And that is what we’ve done this year in 2019 to generate small loan lending.

And one of the technology enhancements that SBA provides is Lender Match. And Lender Match is a tool for small business applicants that has been an incredible success and it serves as a perfect example of how the Government can use technology to improve our public and private partnership.

This is a tool on our website, and you can see the website address right here, that helps small business applicants seeking a small business loan for access to capital. And SBA offers this to all general public at large, free of charge. So the borrower enters some of their own criteria, that’s prompted by the system, and Lender Match will then connect that small business to lenders -- SBA lenders only -- that have requested that type of match for the borrowers.

And as of last month, Lender Match has generated over 4 million leads on behalf of borrowers to our lenders in over 179,000 unique borrowers have been contacted by lenders with financing options. So,
again, Lender Match is a great success, and we are finding some really great success stories from that. So now I’ll turn it over -- back to Larry for questions.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay. Are there any questions for our colleagues from Capital Access?

MS. GAVINO: Just a real quick question. You mentioned that Lender Match is a perfect example of utilization of technology.

MR. MILLER: Yes.

MR. GAVINO: Can you elaborate, please?

MR. MILLER: Sure. The technology is -- it is on SBA’s website, so it is a fully -- it’s a fully transparent, fully electronic system. So it’s open on the web. It’s not monitored by employees at the SBA. The system continually generates leads for lenders, just through a technology platform and sends them emails and so forth. So it’s fully automatic.

MR. GAVINO: Thank you.

Ms. LEWIS: Hi, John. Teresa Lewis. And, Dan, that was really, really helpful. In the recent report that was released by OVBD, there were some recommendations on training, for example, that various stakeholders should provide and types of assistance. Are you working with OVBD on -- or working with your
organizations to see if veterans, they can provide the
specific training for cap access, because that seems to
be, as I’m sure you know, the major complaint by a lot
of the veteran-owned small businesses.

MR. MILLER: And the complaint is that they
don’t know the programs, or they aren’t trained? Could
you elaborate?

MS. LEWIS: They aren’t trained.

MR. MILLER: Okay.

MS. LEWIS: And that is one of the areas where
the veterans themselves have identified that they need
-- they just aren’t aware of a lot of the programs that
are out there and the resources that are available.
And so through that report, there was -- there were
several recommendations, and providing them with
training, because a lot of the veteran-owned small
businesses, even once they get a loan, some don’t know
what to do with -- how to effectively utilize the fund.

MR. MILLER: Yes, yes.

MS. LEWIS: And so helping them with that, is
there any discussion with the organizations that you
support on how to do that?

MR. MILLER: Yes, absolutely. First of all,
you know, we work -- we do work with OVBD and the VBOCs
in getting word out about our lending programs,
especially our microloan program because that is a
program, as Dan mentioned, and I’ll let him elaborate
as well, that is a program that is made by nonprofit
intermediaries. The loans themselves are -- come with
a technical assistance component that helps the
borrowers pre-loan and also post-loan. So it helps
them get into business and stay in business.

We’re also working with all of the resource
partners to provide specific outreach to veterans, and
these resource partners will provide counseling and
training at no cost. They’ll help veterans put
together business plans, projections, and so forth that
lenders would need. And so, yes, we are working
closely with OVBD, and, in fact, we have found that, as
Dan mentioned, a lot of our microloan borrowers, over 8
percent, come back for a Community Advantage loan,
which is a little bit larger.

Microloan maxes out at 50,000, and then we go
from 50 to 250, and then graduate from that and come
back for a loan larger than 250,000 in one of our other
programs, and then eventually go on to not need a
government guarantee, to conventional lending. And
that is really what we strive for.

MS. LEWIS: So is there a list of the
nonprofit on the SBA website?
MR. MILLER: There is. There is a list of all of the nonprofit resource partners, small business development centers, women’s business centers, SCORE chapters across the United States, and the VBOCs are also listed.

MS. LEWIS: Okay, thank you.

MR. MILLER: You’re welcome.

MR. KURTZ: Yeah, just a caveat to that, so we do -- they have done some training in the past for our VBOCs. We do an annual conference, so they came down and did a presentation. We also have collateral that spells out all the loans, so all that collateral goes out to all the VBOC sites, to district offices, veterans business development officers, so -- and events, any events we go to, we take a lot of collateral. So we really try to market those SBA loans and guarantees, so, yeah.

And so we do quite a bit of training, even with new VBOCs. We’ve had five new VBOCs this year, so the training was timely, and I know that that’s part of the curriculum, that they talk about in Module 8, talk about the resources, SBA loans, so we’re trying to get that word out there.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, if there’s no further questions or comments, I want to thank you, John and
Dan, for being here. We’re going to take a 15-minute break, and then we’re going to open up for public comments. We should be back around 2:30 or so.

(Brief recess.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, we’re going to get started back.

Okay, the public comment period is officially open.

MR. PHIPPS: Hi, Larry. This is Michael Phipps. Can you guys -- am I coming through all right?

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: You are, indeed.

MR. PHIPPS: So I just want to reiterate that it’s really important for the VA to show up. I know Mike Zacchea is having somebody talk about certification tomorrow, and I’ve been getting emails as well with people that are having undue burden and lengthy periods of time with certification. And just wanted to make the point that certification is not just about GovCon.

As we know from the statistics, people use this just as a litmus test, and there’s so many people who have already just opted out of even trying anymore. I think it’s really important to work through this, especially as this transition happens with certification and the SBA’s role in certification that
we try to figure out, you know, what these issues are and get them rectified and monitor this process, you know, on a monthly basis and then that we’re reporting on it and it’s actively on the agenda. I know this committee could look at some of the things in its charter or in its agenda and maybe we can take on the certification as one of our items to monitor.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, great point. And Beth is still here with us, and we’re going to -- we were talking about who -- how VA is going to be represented tomorrow. So, again, great point, well taken.

MS. DIELEMAN: Hi, this is Zoey from Aldevra. We are an SDVOSB. Can everyone hear me?

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: We can hear you very well.

MS. DIELEMAN: Okay, good. We just had a question about the small business dashboard that GSA used to maintain. We were wondering where that went or if there’s like another functionality that we could use that’s similar to that.

MR. GAVINO: Let me get back with you with that one. This is Amando Gavino. The question is basically was the small business dashboard, where it went?

MS. DIELEMAN: Yes.
MR. GAVINO: Yes, I’ll get back with you.

MS. DIELEMAN: Okay, thank you. And, then, I had one more question. We didn’t see 2019 goals for the SBA on their website, and we were wondering if that would be updated or not.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Are you -- I guess the question in the room is are you asking for small business goals?

MS. DIELEMAN: Yes, SBA --

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Procurement goals?


MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, that’s another one we’ll have to get back with you on.

MS. DIELEMAN: All right. Thank you so much.

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Do you have contact information we can get back with her?

MS. GARCIA: (Off microphone).

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, we have your -- I was just verifying that we have your contact information, so I definitely want to get back with you with an answer.

MS. DIELEMAN: Awesome. And Maggie Bullard-Marshall who is our VP would also be interested in obtaining this information. Do you have her contact information as well?
MR. STUBBLEFIELD: We do.

MS. DIELEMAN: Okay, thank you very much.

MS. ASHE: Well, I just want to take a minute of time to introduce myself. I’m Barbara Ashe. I’m National Director of the Veteran Institute for Procurement, or VIP for short. I just wanted to provide a quick update as to where we are to date on the training program.

We have two more classes coming up. We have one on March 26th through 28th, which is our VIP Grow curriculum. That class is full and closed. We do take on enrollment year-round, but that particular class is at capacity. We do have another class coming up in June -- and all this is on our website -- but that’s VIP International, and to -- that program helps companies that are looking to do OCONUS work or commercial work globally to learn how to enter those markets. And so there’s -- enrollment is open for that class.

We are looking forward to -- so once we finish through June, that will be 250 companies in the last 12 months that have come through the program. Our latest survey data on our Grow graduates, which we almost have 1,000 of, they’re growing on average 64 percent in one year. So we’re very excited about that and continue to
I was sharing just now that the VETS 2 contract vehicle that was presented today by Amando that about a little over 25 percent of the prime awards of that were VIP graduates, and VA knows that the VECTOR, which is a very popular contract as well, over a third of those are prime awards who were VIP grads. And I haven’t yet met a team that didn’t have a VIP graduate on the team, so that you can’t see, but -- so we measure their success, of course, by this -- our success by their success, and they are winning, but -- so I just wanted to provide an update where we are in the training sessions and looking forward to next year as well.

You know, we have -- we did two starts already this year back in October. And I say this year, our grant, you know, year. And so we have three curriculums -- Start, Grow, and International -- Start being not how to start a company but how to start in federal procurement, and Grow and how to accelerate your success and scale your success, and International, as I mentioned, how to go global. So, anyway, that’s just an update, and we couldn’t do it without SBA’s support and outreach, so thank you very much, Larry.  

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Thank you for that update.
Any questions for Barbara?

(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay. Thank you. Thank you again very much.

All right, the floor is still open for public comments.

(No response.)

MR. STUBBLEFIELD: Okay, no other comments, at this time, we will close the meeting. I want to thank Amy Garcia and Cheryl Simms for all the work that’s gone into putting this together. It’s a huge effort, greatly appreciate all the work. And, Jen, for you being here as well. She’s the quiet one that records everything for us, and a great job as well.

So thank you all for being here. And for those of you who will be here tomorrow for the ACVBA, looking forward to seeing you again. Thank you very much. Meeting adjourned.

(The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Jennifer Metcalf Razzino, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were recorded by me and reduced to typewriting under the supervision of For The Record, Inc.; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were transcribed; and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

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