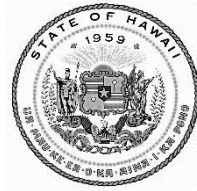


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MILITARY AND VETERAN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, October 19, 2023

1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Online via Zoom

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting the health and welfare of the community is a priority. The meeting was held remotely and in-person, with Board members and staff participating via an online meeting venue and at a physical location.

MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

Trang Malone, Work Initiatives Manager, CVS Health, Chair Military and Veterans Affairs Committee
Cheryl Cross, Owner, C.A. Cross and Associates, LLC, Vice Chair Military and Veterans Affairs Committee

Kat Andrews, Community Employment Coordinator, Department of Veteran Affairs, Homeless Division

Ann Greenlee, Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Services

Deb Uemura, Program Manager, Work for Warriors

Ramon Ruiz, Local Veteran Representative, American Job Center

Kealoha Daubert, Goodwill Industries, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program

GUESTS:

Elizabeth Garcia, Director of Military Spouse Fellowships

Crystal Kearns, Director of Engagement and Events

Adam Rocke, Senior Director of Events and Programs

STAFF:

Bennette Misalucha, DLIR, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council

Carol Kanayama, DLIR, Workforce Development Division, Oahu

Jacqueline Lodge, DLIR, Workforce Development Council

I. Call to Order.....Committee Chair Trang Malone

The Military and Veterans Affairs Committee meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Committee Chair Trang Malone.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. August 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Chair Trang Malone requested a motion to approve the minutes for the August 7, 2023 meeting. Carol Kanayama pointed out corrections to names of staff members: Daven Kawamura, Carol Kanayama, and Katrina Ramos. Vice Chair Cheryl Cross moved to approve the minutes of the August 7, 2023 meeting with corrections mentioned by Carol Kanayama. Deb Uemura seconded the motion. There were no objections or abstentions. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.

III. Executive Director’s Report

Bennette Misalucha shared a presentation. The presentation can be viewed at this link: https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2023/10/WDC-ED-REPORT_Oct2023-1.pdf

IV. Update from Board Retreat and Military and Veterans Affairs Committee’s Action Plan from October 19, 2023 to December 31, 2025

Chair Malone shared feedback from the board retreat that was held on September 23, 2023. The board broke out into small groups to discuss action plans and goals. Their priorities were data sharing and accessibility, helping military spouses find employment, and finding partners to create programs that would support specific industries in Hawaii. Regarding data sharing and accessibility, the group agreed it would be helpful to have access to the number of transitioning service members who would like to stay in Hawaii. For military spouses, some barriers to employment include the lack of flexible or hybrid hours, balancing work, childcare and family needs with work. They agreed it would be great if Workforce Development Council (WDC) and the committee can find ways to move forward and find solutions.

Since the U.S. military is the second economic driver in the state, they also discussed creating talking points and action plans the committee and council can provide to the Governor to support this population. The committee would also like to engage employers and local businesses to connect with this population. Bennette Misalucha pointed out that the American Job Centers (AJC’s) in Las Vegas operate out of non-traditional locations like gyms, libraries, and

prison. She asked if its possible to open and AJC on a military base.

V. Presentation on Recruitment and Outreach Efforts to Engage Youth in Careers in the Military; National and Local Support to Create Economic Opportunity and a Diversified Workforce (including transitioning Military Members and Military Spouses) - Hiring Our Heroes, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Elizabeth Garcia and Crystal Kearns presented to the group. They noted that only 5-10% of service members stay in Hawaii after their service, so there is potential to increase that number. The main reasons why they leave are the high cost of living in Hawaii or their spouse has a job opportunity out of state. If we can connect with spouses and help them find employment in Hawaii, its more likely that they will stay. As previously mentioned, the lack of childcare and the lack of flexible or hybrid hours are barriers to employment.

Crystal Kearns pointed out that AJC's with Disabled Veterans' Outreach Programs (DVOP) have been successful when they are placed on military installations in transitional offices. This has been successful in Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri. It depends on where the AJC is aligned within the State Plan – its either under the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) or Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT). Carol Kanayama noted that DLIR and local areas oversee the AJC's and it's the local area's decision where to locate their AJC's. While an AJC is allowed on a military bases, DVOPs generally cannot serve active-duty military members, so it would not be cost-effective to locate them there. DVOPs can only serve veterans with serious barriers to employment under their funding source of Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Active-duty military members are not veterans until they separate from service. Carol Kanayama suggested that perhaps other states' DVOPs had other sources of funding.

Ann Greenlee pointed out that the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) fund employment navigator positions. They serve those transitioning from Fort Shafter, Schofield and Hickam bases. They serve active-duty service members and their spouses. The employment navigators work with employers nationwide who are looking to hire veterans. In Hawaii they work out of the AJC, which is in the Dole Cannery Offices.

Deb Uemura noted that P3 is the U.S. Army Reserve component for navigator positions. She will follow up on connecting Oceanit to Hiring Our Heroes (HOH).

The group discussed how to position navigators where the needs is, and how to utilize the AJC more efficiently. The goal is to increase participants served by the AJC.

Ann Greenlee is the Chair of the Transition Assistance Program Managers Council. She confirmed there is an opportunity to connect with transition managers (TSM), teams, service members and spouse at her quarterly meetings. Their goal is to keep post-service members in Hawaii. Ann Greenlee confirmed that it is not a public meeting, but people can join us they are interested.

Bennette Misalucha asked how many HOH transitioning service members were hired this past

year and what their 2024 goals are. Crystal Kearns noted that they are not able to track Hawaii numbers specifically, they are only able to track how many offers were made at their events, which includes national employers who hire globally.

Crystal Kearns also brought up skill-bridge opportunities. The installations manage the skill-bridge programs and may have more statistical information. Bennette Misalucha was interested in finding out how many people got jobs and remained in Hawaii. She emphasized the importance of having local data that is relevant to Hawaii. Crystal Kearns replied that they would need to reach out to individual installations to see what their 2024 forecast is. She suggested that Ann Greenlee speak to transition managers to get more information.

Crystal Kearns also mentioned upscaling opportunities that provide certification and training, which would incentivize service members to stay in Hawaii. Its important to figure out what the needs are and who is willing to provide services.

There are also Fellowship Programs available. HOH partners with companies to create a pipeline from employers to the community to find employees. HOH is a U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) skill-bridge provider.

Elizabeth Garcia listed the different Fellowship Programs –

- Corporate – this is for service members with degrees
- Skill-based – this is for service members without degrees
- Solar industry – this includes installers, project managers and IT positions
- Spouse – with a degree
- Spouse – without a degree
- Google certificates – this is an industry recognized certificate
- Sale force certification – these are 100% remote, \$92,000 is the average annual salary

Erica Garcia pointed out that 21% of military spouses are unemployed nationwide and this is an untapped talent pool. HOH is looking for most host companies who will hire active military and their spouses. Tracy Steele manages the spouses that live in Hawaii. She partners with Queens Medical Center to place spouses in healthcare jobs.

Carol Kanayama mentioned that the Army's skill-bridge is accessible in Hawaii. She asked if HOH has connections with other branches of the military. HOH's mission is to connect the military community with meaningful careers. They are the largest DOD contractor for Skill Bridge.

Chair Malone asked how HOH can support WDC and the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. Carol Kanayama recalled that Pacific Shipyard, which is an independent dry dock company in Hawaii, was looking for a skill-bridge program through the Navy. She asked how to connect with the Navy. HOH said its difficult to connect directly with the Navy, but hopefully it will improve. Adam Rocke will share contact information for the Pearl Harbor Hickam commander. He confirmed that HOH can push one of their skill-based fellowship programs to Pacific Shipyard. Program managers will manage service members on the back end. Pacific Shipyards is willing to train candidates from the Navy. Carol Kanayama will follow up with Tracy Steele and Stephanie Watson. Adam Rocke confirmed that HOH has a Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) with DOD so the candidates are vetted and they are ready to be placed with employers.

V. Updates from Workforce Development Division

Carol Kanayama shared a presentation. The presentation can be viewed at this link:

<https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2023/10/Workforce-Development-Division-report-MVAC.10.19.23.pdf>

VI. Announcements

Kat Andrews is hosting a webinar focused on hiring veterans on October 24, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

VII. Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2024.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Malone adjourned the meeting at 2:31 p.m.