

# ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

## WASHINGTON STATE VETERANS EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP (VERG)



### Background

In May 2013, Governor Inslee issued his first Executive Order, 13-01 VETERANS TRANSITION SUPPORT, which states: "...effective immediately, hereby order and direct. Veterans Employee Resource Group... The Office of Financial Management, State Human Resources Division will convene a cross-agency group of veterans in state service to provide advice and assistance on veteran recruitment, retention, and development strategies. Executive cabinet agencies shall provide assistance by providing volunteers and supporting approved initiatives."

The VERG exists to help integrate the experience, values, and knowledge of both veterans and service members in state employment. This Employee Resource Group supports existing state employees who have served as members of the armed forces through recognition, resource identification, and mentorship.

### Goals

The VERG's stated goals are to: recruit veterans to state service through outreach and educational activities; retain veterans by providing a support structure, education, and career progression assistance; and recognize veterans by planning annual activities that honor their military and state service.

## 2014 VERG Significant Accomplishments

(1) Development and roll out of Veteran Employee Career Development Brown Bag Lunch events across the state to connect our veterans in state employment to veterans benefits, resources, and programs, as well as to provide support and information on professional career development in Washington State.



(2) Partnered with the Office of Financial Management and Joint Base Lewis McChord to engage transitioning service members in the Northwest Edge and Veterans Fellowship Programs to provide education and support in bringing top military talent to state agencies through workshops, panel presentations, and agency tours for transitioning service members. This partnership provides transitioning service members the opportunity to learn about the work culture of state agencies; meet with a panel of successful state employees who are veterans to speak about their personal experience and transition from the military, and provide a networking opportunity to engage state hiring managers and human resource professionals. Agency representatives shared their onboarding experiences; discussed organizational culture, mission, vision, and values; hiring policies and processes; and preferred application methods and resume formatting.

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(3) Cat Nichols and Ann Reiter Facilitated a State Government Workshop Panel featuring VERG members from multiple agencies for over 1400 transitioning service members during the 2014 Service Member for Life Summit on Joint Base Lewis McChord.



4.) The VERG Communications and Marketing Team successfully created and distributed a fantastic newsletter for enterprise wide distribution.

### **Next Steps**

2014-15 VERG Priorities/ Action Plan:

The members reviewed all priorities and goals they had set and accomplished in 2013-2014 and established next steps for the coming year to include:

- Soliciting new VERG members to choose one or two subgroups to serve on. Improving communications and utilization of VERG Sharepoint site to accomplish goals with minimal resources.
- Creating an action plan and deliverables for the 2014-15 year.
- Providing ideas and best practices to agencies on how they can recognize their veterans on Veteran's Day.

### **Key Goals**

- Promoting enterprise wide participation in VERG activities/successes.
- Promoting a Peer 2 Peer Mentorship Program as part of the onboarding process for veterans in each agency.
- Establish a fully functional VERG webpage hosted by WDVA.
- Engaging community partners for support.