



**Department of Labor Competitive Grantees Training Conference
'Good Jobs for Veterans'
Omni Hotel at CNN Center, Atlanta, Georgia
July 14, 2010
Event Report**

Attendees: Stacy Bayton

On July 14, 2010, MSCCN Outreach Coordinator Stacy Bayton participated as a panel member at the 2010 Department of Labor Vets Competitive Grantees Training Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia at the Omni Hotel located in CNN Center

The title of the panel was "Enhancing the Effectiveness Job Training/Placement and Retention for Female Veterans, Spouses, and Caregivers". The panel was made up of four members from various agencies that currently work with female veterans to include: Peter Wikul from *America Works*, Kenneth Crawford from *Swords to Plowshares*, Risa Greendlinger from the *National Center on Family Homelessness*, and Stacy Bayton from the *Military Spouse Corporate Career Network*.

The purpose of the panel was to host an interactive work session with grantees who had recently received Department of Labor funds to work with female veterans. The key topics included, but were not limited to:

- Does taking a holistic approach with each veteran, spouse, or caregiver pay off in terms of training, job placement, and retention outcomes?
- How do we identify other types of assistance that our veterans need, and how do we make the connections with other agencies to ensure they receive assistance and do not fall through the cracks?
- How do you develop relationships with employers willing to provide workplace flexibility and accommodation to veterans, spouses, and caregivers and get the job orders?
- What are the strategies for addressing the "double whammy", i.e., employers' needs balanced against special needs resulting from service to our country that our caregivers and spouses face in the workplace?
- How can we keep the focus on what the veteran is capable of doing today and what they can achieve in the future versus their past?
- Have you developed formal training, such as Trauma Informed Care training, to help your employees offset the anger veterans, spouses and caregivers experience in the job search and placement process?

- What are the stereotypes that veterans but particularly female veterans face and how can they be offset?
- How can DOL VETS grantees create feedback mechanisms for their Grant Officer Technical Representative (GOTR), in addition to the formal performance measures, to demonstrate what grantees find most valuable and effective in changing their clients' lives and the tools they need to achieve those results?

Peter Wikul, Kenneth Crawford, and Stacy Bayton are all fellow veterans and experts on working within the veteran communities. This panel discussion explored the questions above and many others from the audience that helped the new grantees identify steps that can be taken to effectively train and place female veterans, spouses, and caregivers in jobs that they can retain, and that provide financial stability, hope, and flexibility as they work to improve their health and quality of life.

This opportunity not only allowed Stacy to share techniques and strategies with the attendees, but provided her with new insights into working with homeless and disabled veterans who are seeking employment. Stacy also learned more about funding sources that are available to organizations like MSCCN to implement measures that are successful and sustainable.

Many work sessions and discussions at the three-day conference involved how to effectively work with female veterans, incarcerated veterans, and homeless veterans. There is a great deal of concern for veterans from OIF/OEF operations who experience high levels of trauma to include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) that affect their successful reintegration back into society upon their return and separation from the military. Gaps in services for veterans and their families oftentimes lead to difficulties in recovery, reintegration, finding employment, and more, which in a number of cases leads to substance abuse, violence, poverty, and/or homelessness.

In summary, this event reinforced what the MSCCN team has found true over time - that there are many issues that need to be addressed in order to assist our veterans and their families, well beyond employment, and this requires the cooperative work of many organizations. By working together and establishing an active network of support, organizations can ensure they offer long-term, sustainable solutions that meet the various needs of veterans and their families.



DOL VETS Conference Discussion



Risa Greendlinger from the National Center on Family Homelessness