Jewish Vocational Services of Los Angeles Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund
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Name of Project: Vets In Tech
Grant Number: 7787039
Start Date: July 2015 **End Date:** March 2017

I. Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: $517,502
- CETF Grant Amount: $185,000
- Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal ($332,502): 102%
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: ($517,502/75) $6,900

II. Project Description, Goals and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description

Jewish Vocational Services of Los Angeles (JVS) Veterans First Vets in Tech project recruits unemployed and underemployed U.S. military veterans and their family members for career opportunities using information and communication technology skills. Working in partnership with local community colleges, specialized post-secondary schools and employers, JVS assists qualified veterans in accessing training and obtaining industry recognized certifications that will lead to employment in the information and communication technology (ICT) industry. Training is provided in the areas of web support, database administration, software and app development and test preparation for certification exams. JVS also provides job readiness services and works with employers to develop internship opportunities.

Goals and Objectives Summary

JVS accomplished 100% of the goals and objectives. This included establishing formal partnerships with five local colleges and post-secondary schools; sharing information about broad band adoption and ICT career pathways with eighty veterans and family members; enrolling seventy-two qualified veterans in training programs to achieve industry recognized certification; developing internships for six veterans and placing 72 veterans in jobs with annual salaries that range from $50,000 - $90,000.

Project Outcomes Summary

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
Number of partnership agreements with local colleges, post-secondary schools	5	5	100%
Number of veterans with Information and Communications Tech Certifications	68	72	106%
Number of veterans placed in internships	6	6	100%
Number of veterans and family members attending Broadband Adoption events	45	80	177%
Number of veterans placed in jobs using their ICT skills.	69	72	104%

III. Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

JVS Veterans First/Vets in Tech project achieved its five main outcomes: establishing formalized partnerships with five secondary education programs; enrolling 68 veterans in training to obtain industry recognized ICT certifications; placing 6 veterans in internships; and placing 69 veterans in jobs using their ICT skills.

Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement

JVS achieved and exceeded 100% of the agreed upon outcomes.

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation
Not applicable.

Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project

JVS Vets in Tech program was among the first programs in Los Angeles to focus on helping U.S. Veterans gain skills, confidence, and training needed to parlay their experience in performing network related tasks in the military into good paying ICT jobs in the civilian workplace. Working in partnership with several local community colleges, we were able to conduct an effective outreach and recruitment campaign. Also, our partnerships with other veteran service organizations and government entities, allowed us to provide these veterans with a broad range of supportive services such as housing assistance, clothing, transportation and mental health services needed to support their transition to employment. JVS organized monthly ICT Career and Broadband Forum Events at various JVS WorkSource Centers and at colleges across Los Angeles. We also hosted several vet-specific ICT Job Fairs that provided employer partners the opportunity to recruit and hire qualified veterans.

Impacts of the Project

Alex and his wife both served in the U.S. military. Alex served in the U.S. Marines and his wife in the U.S. Army. During his time in the Marines, Alex was deployed to Bosnia and Haiti as a combat medic. On September 11, 2001, he was stationed at the Pentagon where he suddenly found himself racing to retrieve and treat the injured bodies on that day. Upon being discharged from the military he discovered that none of his training or experience transferred to the civilian workplace. Alex happened to meet with a recruiter during a job fair who referred him to JVS Veterans First/Vets in Tech program. Alex had a natural affinity for engineering and Information Technology but did not have the resources to pursue the education or certifications needed. Through the Vets in Tech project, Alex was able to get the intensive, advanced training needed to become certified in cybersecurity. With his new skills and certification, Alex landed the position of IT auditor, working full-time and earning a very good salary that helps him support his wife and their two young children. Alex's wife, who served in the U.S. Army also enrolled in Veterans First/Vets in Tech project and was given the opportunity to receive training and certification in Data Analytics. She is grateful to be working with a small company as their Office Manager. "For both of us, JVS Veterans First/Vets in Tech program was the lynchpin – not only for helping us to gain the training and certification we needed but for their compassionate support and understanding of fellow veterans. The Veterans First program has made a world of difference for our family and we are deeply grateful."

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation

We had intended to develop internship opportunities for veterans as a pathway to employment however we learned several months into the project that our private employers preferred to hire veterans directly into employment rather than provide internships due to the extensive security protocols within their network. This turned out to be good news for our veterans who were eager to move directly to securing a full-time job with benefits. We were able to secure several internship opportunities with government organizations but the process for placement took a long time due to extensive security clearances and then these positions tended not transition into full-time employment.

Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems

JVS Veterans First decided not to pursue internships and instead focus on working with companies to recruit direct hires and hosted several ICT focused Job Fairs for veterans to help employers recruit and hire qualified veterans.

IV.   Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: Establishing partnerships with the community college system helped us to recruit qualified and motivated veterans. The person to reach out to is the Chair of the IT Department who can help disseminate program information to the teachers and students at the school.

Lesson 2: Advanced level certifications are very costly. The veterans enrolled in this program came to us with varying levels of education, skills and background experience related to information and communications technology. That made it necessary for us to provide individualized assessments and to be able to offer a wide range of IT training and certifications that ranged from entry to advanced level certifications. The cost for advanced level certifications can reach up to $10,000 and the time to complete these training classes ranges from 3 weeks to 3 months.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide

Recommendation 1ss: To expand this project to other regions, will require strong partnerships with the community college system in that region, training providers with strong ties to employers, and employers that are committed to hiring veterans. You will need to hire a lead staff person who is the single point of contact for these partners and secure funders willing to cover the high cost of training and certifications.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

Recommendation 1: We had a great working partnership with both of our CETF Program Officers who gave us support and encouragement throughout the granting period. When CETF changed Program Officers toward the end of the grant, this transition went smoothly and there were no hiccups in communication.

Recommendation 2: The fiscal and programmatic reporting forms are somewhat confusing however our Program Officer was always available to provide clarification and answer questions.

V.   Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

The JVS Vets in Tech project purchased a laptop computer for $1,286 with CETF funds.

Date	Description	Purpose	Amount	How it will be used.
09/11/2008	Laptop Computer	Computer for program staff.	$1,286	JVS Veterans First staff will continue using this computer to support our Vets in Tech project.

Unspent CETF Grant Funds

All of the CETF grants funds were expended.