



CONTACT: Amanda Riik
508-791-1213 x123
Amandariik@veteransinc.org
www.veteransinc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Veterans Inc. Receives Award to Help Veterans Get Jobs

Microsoft Corporation awards grant to boost efforts to help veterans transition to civilian employment in Worcester, MA

Worcester, MA., November 10, 2010 — Microsoft today announced that it has awarded the Veterans Inc. Employment & Training Program an Elevate America veterans initiative grant to provide veterans with a comprehensive set of services over the next two years, including technology skills training, job placement, career counseling, and other support services such as childcare, transportation, and housing.

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, last week's unemployment report showed that while the overall unemployment rate last month remained steady, among Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, the unemployment rate rose last month to 10.6 percent (compared to 8.8 percent for non-veterans). Over the last six months, the average unemployment rate among those veterans has been 16 percent higher than the rate for non-veterans (10.7 percent compared to 9.2 percent). To help bridge this gap, Microsoft is awarding \$2 million in cash overall and up to \$6 million in software and information technology (IT) skills training curriculum to six organizations that provide veterans and their spouses with the support they need to successfully transition to civilian careers. More than half of today's jobs require some technology skills, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that will reach 77 percent in the next decade.

Veterans Inc. will expand its highly regarded and comprehensive veterans employment and training programs to serve a greater number of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans, as well as National Guard and Reserve components of the military and their spouses in the greater Massachusetts area. Through career counseling, education, training, job placement, one-on-one case management and support services, Veterans Inc. and its partners will prepare veterans for successful entry into the civilian workplace and high-demand occupations such as green jobs, computer specialists and healthcare.

"As our soldiers come home from Iraq, this is the perfect time for Veterans Inc. to expand its services in collaboration with the Microsoft Elevate America veterans initiative," said Denis Leary, Veterans Inc. Executive Director. "With this grant, Veterans Inc. will bring its successful, nationally renowned Employment and Training model to returning soldiers it has never served before, including members of the National Guard, reservists, and their spouses," explained Lieutenant Colonel Vincent J. Perrone, USAF (Retired), Veterans Inc. President and CEO.

Microsoft also announced that it is offering software donations to each of the 100 organizations that applied during the competitive Elevate America veterans initiative grant process, in recognition of the important work they are doing with veterans and their spouses across the country, and to help reach even more veterans with the resources they need for success in the civilian workplace.

“More and more jobs in every sector of the economy demand technology skills,” said Curt Kolcun, vice president of Microsoft U.S. Public Sector. “By partnering with organizations who have demonstrated expertise in education and skills training programs, we are proud to help provide resources to veterans and their spouses who need these skills to help them in the transition to civilian work and life.”

“Veterans, Inc. is an extraordinarily important part of our community,” said U.S. Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA). I’m pleased that Microsoft has recognized the incredible work being done there. These funds will help our returning veterans get the skills and training they need – and deserve.”

Microsoft collaborated with nationally recognized Veterans Service Organizations to provide guidance and feedback throughout the development of this initiative. The members of this advisory group have been instrumental in helping Microsoft determine the specific needs of veterans and how to effectively reach them. Members of the Elevate America veterans initiative Advisory Committee include The American Legion, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, United Service Organizations (USO), and Wounded Warrior Project.

More information on Elevate America, including resources available for veterans, is available at www.microsoft.com/veterans.

###