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REPORTERS**

**VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
THIRD WEDNESDAY WEBINAR**

**Best Practices For Recruiting Veterans:
Making Virginia "VET Strong"**

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

☎ 855.667.0077

☎ 540.667.4114

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APPEARANCES

Brent Sheffler

Managing Director of Knowledge Transfer and Strategic
Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

Tom Barto

Program Manager
TMG Inc.

Connie Long

Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA)

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1 **Virginia Economic Development Partnership Webinar**

2 **Wednesday, March 19, 2014**

3 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Hello everyone. Welcome
4 to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's
5 third Wednesday Webinar. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-1.)
6 Thank you for joining us today. This Third Wednesday
7 Webinar is the third in a 2014 series and is titled
8 "Best Practices for Recruiting Veterans, Making
9 Virginia Vets Strong." We expect today's session to
10 run about one hour. My name is Brent Sheffler; I serve
11 as managing director of knowledge transfer and
12 strategic outreach on the business expansion division
13 at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. At
14 the controls is Connie Long, with the Virginia
15 Economic Developer's Association, also known as VEDA.
16 Connie is managing the dashboard and will moderate the
17 Q and A part of today's webinar. The Virginia Economic
18 Development Partnership is collaborating with TMG,
19 Inc. to present today's webinar. TMG is a Virginia
20 based company whose services include consulting and
21 training companies in the best practices for
22 recruiting, hiring, and retaining veterans.

23 In just a minute I will introduce our
24 program for today, but before I do I'd like to provide
25 our listeners with a bit of webinar housekeeping.

1 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-2.)
2 Those of you attending this webinar are in listen only
3 mode for the duration of the program. Your mics and
4 your telephones have been muted; we can't hear you,
5 but we can read what you write in the question panel.
6 Usually, this question panel is located in the upper
7 right of your screen as you see on this slide. We are
8 taking questions and we want this webinar to be
9 interactive. Those of you who have screens on your
10 desktop, laptop, or your mobile device are invited to
11 type your questions in the question panel window on
12 your go-to webinar dashboard at any time during this
13 session. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-3.) Connie Long is
14 able to read the questions, submit it, and can
15 communicate those questions to us as you proceed
16 through today's session. Again, we want this to be
17 interactive, so please, go ahead and drop a question
18 into the question panel if you have one.

19 Several of you have asked how you can
20 receive a copy of the presentation. This session is
21 being recorded. After we close today's session and we
22 post the recorded webinar on the virginiaallies.org
23 website, you'll be able to link to it there. (Refer to
24 Exhibit-Slide-4.) If you missed any of the webinars
25 conducted during the last year, or would like to

1 revisit any of the sessions already held this year,
2 you're invited to go to the virginiaallies.org website
3 where each webinar conducted so far has been posted
4 and is made available to you. Also after we end
5 today's session and once you have closed go-to
6 webinar, you will receive an email with a few survey
7 questions. The survey should arrive in your email
8 within twenty-four hours after we close today's
9 webinar. You are encouraged to take a minute to
10 respond to the survey and give us your feedback. This
11 will help us improve and to plan for future webinars.
12 Our third Wednesday webinars are part of Virginia's
13 Economic Development Partnership's allied
14 communications strategy. The webinars we held in 2013
15 and the webinars we plan to showcase this year are
16 designed to bring subject matter experts to address
17 topics that are important to you and to share
18 knowledge about available resources. It's our
19 objective to keep you, our Virginia allies and
20 partners, well informed so that we can collectively
21 accomplish our mission and realize our economic
22 development goals. I'd like to also point out, thank
23 you to all of you who responded to the more thorough
24 webinar survey that we sent out the last few weeks. We
25 received your responses and we have kept those

1 responses and we will be getting that report out
2 shortly about the results of that and it looks very
3 favorable. We do have some room for improvement,
4 clearly, and some topics that are of interest to all
5 of you and we want to make sure we are responding to
6 you on your needs and wishes on that.

7 For those of you just now joining us,
8 today's topic is Best Practices for Recruiting
9 Veterans, Making Virginia Vet Strong. (Refer to
10 Exhibit-Slide-5)
11 Our speaker is Tom Barto, Program Manager with TMG
12 Inc. I will introduce Tom in just a minute. Today's
13 agenda includes five live polls. Each poll includes a
14 question and a few possible responses for you to
15 consider. When we conduct the poll, Connie will start
16 the live poll, and we will invite you to review the
17 question and to click on the box next to your
18 preferred response. You will have a little less than a
19 minute for each poll so we can move quickly through
20 the program. All responses received will be aggregated
21 and we will show the tabulated results as each poll
22 happens. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-6.)
23 In addition to the live poll, here are a few questions
24 that Tom Barto will cover today. He will cover
25 questions such as who is a veteran? And what

1 qualifications do veterans have that can serve the
2 existing business and industry? What are some typical
3 recruitment practices? And what does it mean to be
4 "veteran friendly?" How can companies create a
5 workplace culture that is "Vet Strong?" And where can
6 economic developers and companies go to find
7 additional resources? We have considerable material to
8 cover, so we will go ahead and move on. (Refer to
9 Exhibit-Slide-7.)

10 Now, allow me introduce our speaker, Tom Barto,
11 Program Manager with TMG a Virginia based firm
12 dedicated to helping business and industry become vet
13 strong. Tom has served TMG, Inc. since April, 2011.
14 His responsibilities include helping employers across
15 the Commonwealth learn how to recapitalize their
16 workforce by recruiting transitioning veterans and
17 those serving the National Guard and reservists. Prior
18 to joining TMG Tom worked with a few government-
19 contracting firms and was involved in contract
20 management, responsible for the coordination of
21 contractual requirements and deliverables. His work
22 involved interactions with the Department of Defense,
23 the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland
24 Security, and all branches of the federal armed
25 forces. Tom is a graduate of Christopher Newport

1 University, and holds a bachelor's degree in
2 philosophy with a concentration in values and
3 professions and has a minor in Spanish. Please join me
4 in welcoming Tom Barto as our speaker today. Tom?

5 **MR. BARTO:** Thanks Brent. Thanks for
6 having me. It's a pleasure to be here virtually. We
7 always like to start presentations like this with
8 bottom line up front. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-8.)
9 This is a program, the Vet Strong program, is all
10 about connecting the dots. So, Virginia's companies
11 need workers. According to Blue Print Virginia, a
12 study done by the Hampton Roads Chamber of the
13 Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Virginia will need an
14 estimated two million new workers to help support the
15 state's economic growth over the next ten years.
16 Transitioning veterans can help fill that gap. The
17 U.S. Army alone would transition around 70,000
18 soldiers every year, and almost double that with
19 140,000 transitioning in FY14 alone. Companies locate
20 and expand where they have resources, so by tapping
21 into this population of transitioning veterans and
22 currently, those currently serving in the National
23 Guard and reserves, the employers can find talented
24 resources and a talented recruiting pool for them to
25 recruit the best- qualified workers. A Vet Strong

1 culture will help position Virginia as business
2 friendly and making it the most veteran friendly state
3 in the nation. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-9.)
4 Since June of 2012, when the Commonwealth of Virginia
5 started the V3 program, TMG has trained almost two
6 hundred, has certified almost two hundred Virginian
7 employers and we have eighteen learning events. We've
8 actually trained now almost six hundred employers.
9 We've certified a hundred and over 180 at this point
10 and those companies have pledged almost 5500 jobs to
11 veterans. And since the beginning of the program
12 about, almost 3300 of those jobs have been filled. We
13 really measure the retention effort of those vets
14 hired and to date those 180 companies have reported
15 thirty of those vet hires have actually made it to
16 their one-year anniversary.

17 So, that brings us to our first poll. (Refer to
18 Exhibit-Slide-10.) Virginia's unemployment rate is
19 approximately 5.2 percent. Approximately how many
20 veterans are unemployed in the Commonwealth of
21 Virginia? (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-11.) Please select
22 one: 12,000; 31,000; 113,000; or 220,000. Again, this
23 number fluctuates month to month and is seasonally
24 adjusted but 5.2 is the most recent numbers reported
25 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

1 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Tom, this is Brent. I'm
2 going to ask you just to adjust your mic just a little
3 bit as they're taking this poll and that way we might
4 have less of an echo going on. But otherwise it's
5 fine.

6 **MR. BARTO:** (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-
7 12.) So it looks like the majority of our respondents
8 are showing 113,000 as the unemployment numbers for
9 veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In actuality
10 that number, that guess is a little high; we're
11 looking at about 31,000 unemployed vets in the state
12 of Virginia. So here's some statistics for you.
13 Looking at 2013, there's about 115,000 active duty
14 military personnel; 140,000 actual veterans in the
15 Commonwealth of Virginia and around 31,000 of those
16 are unemployed with a 3.7 percent unemployment rate
17 for veterans in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

18 **MR. SHEFFLER:** And Tom, we're going to
19 add to that these numbers are generated by the
20 Virginia Economic Development Partnership's research
21 division. It's the best estimate of unemployed
22 veterans that we know of for Virginia and it shows
23 that we're making progress but it appears that the
24 unemployment rate for veterans is dropping faster than
25 the average unemployment rate, which is good, but with

1 more than 30,000 veterans estimated to be unemployed
2 in the state of Virginia we still have quite a bit of
3 work to do. I think you'd agree with that.

4 **MR. BARTO:** Correct. And the veteran
5 population will increase steadily over the next five
6 to ten years as military draw down increases, which
7 will...employment opportunities will attract more
8 veterans to the state of Virginia as an effect of
9 that. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-13.) So what is our
10 mission? The Vet Strong team energizes America's
11 economy by teaching employers how to recapitalize
12 their workforce through recruiting, hiring, training,
13 and retaining veterans. Our focus is on one employer,
14 one job, one vet at a time. Really our...the
15 difference maker between the Vet Strong program and a
16 lot of the other agencies and programs out there is
17 our focus is on the employer's side and not on the
18 veteran job seeker's side. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-
19 14.) So, I'd like to simplify things through a math
20 problem, although I am a philosophy major. We have
21 about 450,000 working eligible vets with around a five
22 percent unemployment rate, which gives us a target of
23 about 22,500 vets that need to be hired and retained
24 in the Commonwealth of Virginia. With about 150,000
25 employers in the Commonwealth with under a thousand

1 employees, if we can educate one-out-of-six employers
2 to hire and retain one veteran we've effectively
3 solved the veteran unemployment problem within the
4 Commonwealth. This is about vets helping vets so our
5 focus is not on the 22,500 unemployed vets, but the
6 remaining number of vets that are currently working in
7 a company within the Commonwealth; to be able to
8 influence their management and their hiring managers
9 that hiring veterans is a better business decision.

10 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-15.) So that brings us to
11 poll number two. Are transitioning vets and those
12 serving in the National Guard and Reserves a good
13 resource for recapitalizing America's work force?
14 Employers are always looking for best-qualified
15 candidates; the key is not to fall for the skill's
16 page. Vet Strong employers focus on the fit, not the
17 skill, because we believe that the skill can be
18 trained. Overwhelmingly, we have a yes answer, which
19 makes me happy; it means I'm doing my job correctly.

20 So as we've been travelling around the
21 Commonwealth of Virginia and working with companies
22 and holding training events, we've found that
23 employers fall out into one of three categories. I'm
24 sorry; I got, I skipped ahead a little bit. Next
25 poll...

1 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Yes, right, there we go.

2 **MR. BARTO:** Yes. (Refer to Exhibit-
3 Slide-16.) Does your organization actively target
4 military service members as a resource, as a
5 recruiting source? Yes, no, or I don't know. Many
6 employers look at hiring vets but they do so passively
7 without an active focus on that population, which is
8 shown here in the poll results: thirty-three percent
9 said yes, twenty-five percent said no, and forty-two
10 are I don't know, so, which lines up to what I was
11 saying previously.

12 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-17.) On the next slide are,
13 is, when we are working with employers, they usually
14 fall into one of the three categories: they're already
15 vet strong, which means they are currently have an
16 active recruiting program focused on the military
17 population; they are vet ready, which is a good fit, a
18 good place for veterans to go find a career, or they
19 don't have an active recruiting model and they need
20 help to learn how to do so; and then there's those
21 that are not vet ready, which means they are not a
22 good fit for vets which, for many reasons, they could
23 be minimum wage jobs, seasonal work, and those kinds
24 of positions, which is not a bad thing, but maybe not
25 a good place for vets to find a meaningful career

1 after the military. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-18.) So,
2 when vets are looking for the next step in their next
3 step in the careers, they have some expectations
4 coming out of the military. So, the first one is good
5 leadership. Veterans have come to expect good first
6 line leaders; they have received that kind of
7 leadership in the military and they've been trained to
8 have very good leaderships skills, so when they are
9 looking for their next step in life, they're looking
10 for strong leaders. They also want companies to teach
11 them what they need to know in order to be successful.
12 So having a new hire orientation and training program
13 is essential for helping those veterans transition
14 into this living workforce. They also want to be part
15 of the team, which means you want to actually pull
16 them into the organization, help them transition and
17 navigate through the on-boarding process so that they
18 can get the work and get the training and skills that
19 they need to be successful sooner in the process. Vets
20 are also looking for a chance to win. In the military
21 they have a very deliberate career path and that's
22 something that they come to expect in this living
23 workforce. So being to tell them and show them what
24 they, what their career will look like if they're a
25 successful employee is very important to them.

1 And, looking at the compensation side of
2 things, they're looking for at least 25K plus benefits
3 and be a full time teammate from the very beginning.
4 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-19.) So who's eligible to
5 join the military? Many people don't realize that only
6 twenty-five percent of Americans under the age of
7 twenty-four is even eligible to join the military.
8 Medical conditions, criminal histories, high school
9 graduates, a lot; the U.S. Army and the U.S. Military
10 has the most sophisticated hiring process in the
11 nation if not in the world.

12 Next slide, Brent. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-
13 20.)

14 So, where do we find them? Using a passive procurement
15 talent acquisition systems generates a poor candidate
16 pool. Vet Strong employers use an active recruiting
17 model to find the best fit and we, the Vet Strong
18 team, teaches companies how to fish, not to fish for
19 them. We are not a hiring agency and we don't provide
20 a list of resumes or candidates for companies. We
21 teach companies how to use the resources available to
22 them to find the best-qualified candidates. I always
23 use, I'm a big college basketball fan, and I always
24 use the Coach Kay as an example with Duke University,
25 that he does not wait for freshman orientation to ask

1 people if they know how to play basketball and he does
2 not put ads in the paper for basketball players; he
3 knows what the best candidates look like and the best
4 athletes look like and he goes and actively recruits
5 or he finds the best qualified players. (Refer to
6 Exhibit-Slide-21.) We also understand that each size
7 company has their own operational circumstances, which
8 requires a customized talent acquisitions solution.
9 Small companies under fifty people may only hire once
10 or twice a year and then in small numbers. Medium
11 sized companies under three hundred hire ten to fifty
12 people a year to include temps and have a consistent
13 and predictable hiring forecast, so they can predict
14 in the future what their hiring needs will be. Large
15 companies, under a thousand people, have a very
16 predictable and determined hiring forecast on a
17 monthly basis. And then the enterprise companies, with
18 over a thousand, hiring very consistently from month
19 to month and week to week. So each one of these
20 categories is going to need a specific solution
21 customized to their hiring needs and operational
22 circumstances. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-22.) So what's
23 made our program successful? First of all, this is not
24 a jobs initiative but an economic development
25 initiative, which is why I am here talking to you

1 today. This is all about recapitalizing the workforce
2 and helping companies run a better business by hiring
3 better people. And our focus is on employers first and
4 then vets. If we can train, it takes as much resources
5 and effort to train a hundred veterans to find a job
6 as it takes to train one employer to find a hundred
7 vets. It's more efficient to focus on the employers
8 because they hold the core data metric, which are the
9 jobs and the hiring demand. Our programs all about
10 educating and incentivizing employers and encouraging
11 them to hire and helping them to connect the dots and
12 find qualified candidates.

13 We started the V3 program with an inter-
14 agency working group, to be able to pull together all
15 of the agencies, both for profits, not-for-profits,
16 state and federal agencies who are, their mission is
17 to help employers find and connect the veterans
18 looking for work. And again this is a public/private
19 partnership; the federal and state government help
20 seed the field and then businesses support via
21 corporate philanthropy, sponsorships, and donations.
22 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-23.) Over the past two years,
23 the V3 program and the Vet Strong program have been
24 recognized as best practices across the country.
25 Virginia Commonwealth University Excellence in

1 Government Award awarded the V3 program with the
2 Innovation in Government Award in 2013. Blue Print
3 Virginia included both the Workforce and Veteran
4 Strategic Initiatives. White House Joining Forces,
5 U.S. Chamber of Commerce have both recognized the V3
6 and Vet Strong programs as a national best practice.
7 We have now started working in other states to create
8 the same model and we've developed the AUSA. Valued
9 Veterans program to work with the grant opportunities
10 to help train more employers using the influence and
11 resources of large corporations like Wal-Mart and
12 Altria. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-24.) So, poll number
13 four is all vets are heroes. True or False? I've
14 always cautioned employers don't hire a vet because
15 you feel bad for them or you feel like it's your
16 patriotic duty; don't hire a vet just because they're
17 a vet. You must continue to screen an interview
18 process to determine their background and their fit
19 within your organization. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-
20 25.) The majority of the respondents responded that
21 this is a true statement and in large part it is.
22 However, there are many types of discharged and there
23 are many instances where veterans may not be a good
24 fit and may not have served honorably in the military.
25 So, there's just a word of caution as to how to screen

1 those and understand what their military and service
2 background were like in the military.

3 So what is our definition of a veteran?
4 There's many definitions, including the federal V-Day
5 definition, which is mainly used for their disability
6 ratings. However, in the Vet Strong program, we say a
7 veteran is a person who has served in the active duty
8 military and was discharged or released under
9 conditions other than dishonorable or currently
10 serving guardsmen or reservists. (Refer to Exhibit-
11 Slide-26.) Again, there many reasons for discharge
12 from military service. Here is a list of the types of
13 discharge; and again, if a candidate veteran has
14 anything other than an honorable discharge, take
15 caution, ask why, and ask for a copy of their DD214,
16 which will show you a record of their service and an
17 explanation of their discharge. Again, if you're
18 looking at anything other than below, honorable or
19 general discharge then there's some kind of...there's
20 a reason behind that, either through having some types
21 of violations or criminal conduct and things of that
22 nature. So take caution and really ask to see what
23 kind of discharge when they left the military. (Refer
24 to Exhibit-Slide-27.) So, really the core of our
25 program is the difference between vet friendly and vet

1 strong. Vet friendly you think these are companies
2 that like vets, they don't discriminate against vets,
3 but they don't have an active recruiting process to go
4 find them and pull them into their organization. They
5 have not changed their passive recruiting or hiring
6 process. We want to move companies from vet friendly
7 to vet strong where they want vets, they've changed
8 their process to actively recruiting and hiring
9 veterans, they have a focused veteran retention
10 system, and they use vets as a recruiting pool to
11 recruit and hire more vets. (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-
12 28.) So are you vet friendly or vet strong? Yes, vet
13 friendly; yes, vet strong; neither, or I don't know.
14 And I understand that many of you are economic
15 developers so this is kind of a general question and,
16 considering those employers that you work with on a
17 day-to-day basis, where do you think they would fall
18 into these categories? And this is indicative of what
19 we've seen over the past two or three years; that most
20 companies are vet friendly, which means that they're
21 good fits for vets, but they're not really doing
22 anything to actively recruit them as a focused
23 recruiting resource. We want to move more of these
24 companies into the vet strong category by giving them
25 some training and education on where to focus their

1 recruiting efforts to better find qualified
2 candidates.

3 So, that brings me to our path forward.
4 Educate employers in your network about the benefits
5 of hiring and retaining veterans. A V3 certification
6 through the Virginia Department of Veteran Services
7 and Virginia Employment Commission is available. They
8 have a program, www.dvsv3.com, where you can learn
9 more about their certification program. Training is
10 also available through TMG's Vet Strong Program, and
11 you can find out more information about that at
12 vetstrong.us or tmgva.com. You can also host a
13 training event to educate Virginia employers in your
14 network. TMG will come put together and we have a very
15 robust training offerings that can be customized to
16 your specific needs. We'd be happy to have a
17 conversation about that.

18 Next is to evangelize to your network,
19 within your industry, within your community. We do
20 training conferences regularly around the state. We
21 have one coming up in Northern Virginia, in
22 Alexandria, on April the eighth, and you can visit the
23 TMG or Vet Strong websites for more information. And
24 you can also connect with me on LinkedIn to get my
25 regular updates about our upcoming programs.

1 And then finally hire and retain vets or
2 encourage the employers that you work with to hire and
3 retain vets because they're a great business decision.
4 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-29.) So, we are on a mission
5 to change the way America thinks about hiring and
6 retaining veterans, one employer, one vet, one job at
7 a time.

8 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-30.) And here are the
9 websites and my contact information, please feel free
10 to reach out to me if you have any questions or
11 concerns or if there's any opportunity for me to
12 interact with the employers that you deal with on a
13 day-to-day basis to help them become vet strong.

14 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-31.)

15 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Very good Tom, thank you
16 very much. Those of you who joined us in the middle of
17 the program, you've been listening to Tom Barto,
18 program manager for TMG Inc. a Virginia based firm
19 dedicated to helping companies across the Commonwealth
20 learn how to reenergize and recapitalize their
21 workforce and to become vet strong. We now have an
22 opportunity to take questions. If you have questions
23 please type them into the question panel on the right.

24 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-32.)

25 Excuse me, I just muted myself. (Refer to

1 Exhibit-Slide-33.) And what we will do now is we will
2 take some questions. Connie is monitoring those
3 questions and will communicate those questions to us.
4 We'll take as many questions as we can before the
5 close of the hour. I think we have plenty of time for
6 our Q and A timeframe so, Connie, if you would let us
7 know what you have at this time.

8 **MS. LONG:** Okay, Brent, thanks. Tom,
9 this is for you. What is ASVAP referenced on who is
10 eligible for an active military service? I think they
11 want to know what that acronym stands for.

12 **MR. BARTO:** ASVAP? I'm sorry, let me
13 check and see where that acronym is at...

14 **MS. LONG:** It's on the active military
15 service slide. Who is eligible for active military
16 service?

17 **MR. BARTO:** Oh, the ASVAP. That is the
18 military's tool for assessing for the aptitude of
19 those joining or applying to join the military. It's
20 one of the most predictive aptitude tests in
21 existence. It tests the candidate's in a number of
22 areas and then provides a score, but not only does it
23 provide a score, but you have to qualify above a
24 certain amount. It also predicts where you would be
25 most successful within the military and what jobs you

1 would be the best fit for. This is a test that you
2 take, I actually took it in high school, as you go
3 into the military, so that they have an idea where you
4 would fit and also to test your aptitude and ability
5 to do the work that the military demands.

6 **MS. LONG:** Okay, can you name some
7 companies in Virginia that can serve as models for
8 being vet strong?

9 **MR. BARTO:** Of course. We've worked with
10 several throughout the Commonwealth. Capital One has
11 probably the best affinity network that I've seen.
12 They actually have a group of veterans within the
13 organization in all different departments who serve as
14 recruiters. They actually sit through the interview
15 and on-boarding process for veteran new hires and they
16 serve as coaches and mentors through the first couple
17 years on the job as a resource for those veteran new
18 hires in their transition process. We've also seen
19 Dominion Resources as a very great, best practice;
20 they have a very focused recruiting effort on veteran
21 hiring and Matt Kellam has been a great resource for
22 us there as the lead of their military recruiting
23 program. So, those are two of the larger companies in
24 the Commonwealth and we've seen, case by case, some
25 best practices in the smaller companies throughout the

1 Commonwealth. Just to be able to focus on their
2 specific communities and the veteran population there.
3 So you can find a list of Vet Strong companies on the
4 vetstrong.us website and also the vet's V3 certified
5 companies are listed on the DVSV3 website as well.

6 **MS. LONG:** For areas not in the vicinity
7 of a military base what's the best way to get job
8 notices to the veteran population?

9 **MR. BARTO:** There are a number of
10 different ways and many employers don't realize that
11 in almost every community that there is a National
12 Guard armory. They're not active duty stations;
13 however they do have those National Guard members that
14 can fit their needs. But also, h2h.jobs is the Office
15 of the Secretary of Defense, their main website for
16 transitioning veterans to post their jobs...or post
17 their resumes as well for companies to post their jobs
18 for free on that website. Again, that's h2h.jobs. H,
19 the number two, H, dot jobs.

20 **MS. LONG:** What relocation expectations
21 are reasonable for both the potential employer and the
22 veteran related to new jobs?

23 **MR. BARTO:** We've seen that; we call it
24 the "one-third rule." One third of transitioning
25 veterans will stay where they're transitioning from

1 because that's where their family has put roots down,
2 their kids are going to school, their spouses have
3 jobs, and they can find work in that area. Another
4 third will go home to wherever home is and many people
5 don't realize that the military will actually pay for
6 their the move of a transitioning veteran to a place
7 of their choosing. So that takes the relocation burden
8 off the employer. And then the other third will go to
9 wherever jobs are. And again, the military will pay
10 for that relocation cost for one additional move for a
11 transitioning veteran after they've left military
12 service.

13 **MS. LONG:** How do companies apply for
14 the Vet Strong Certification Program?

15 **MR. BARTO:** The Vet Strong Certification
16 Program, you can contact me. We actually do a number
17 of training programs. We can come and sit down with
18 your company and do what we call a vet ready training
19 event. It is a focused one-on-one training for
20 individual employers. We also do large conferences
21 like we're doing on April 8th, in Alexandria, to reach
22 a wider audience. But also the V3 certification, you
23 can find out more about that at the DVSV3.com website,
24 and that's run by the Department of Veteran's
25 Services.

1 **MS. LONG:** I understand from a
2 Department of Labor Presentation over a year ago that
3 vets who have been driving tanks, et cetera, come back
4 to the states not able to automatically qualify for
5 getting a commercial driver's license. Is that still
6 the case?

7 **MR. BARTO:** The Military's gotten much
8 better at this. The soldiers for life program has
9 created the...partnered with the Virginia Department
10 of Motor Vehicles to...for a program they call "troops
11 to trucks" where the training that soldiers get in the
12 military to learn how to drive those vehicles actually
13 simultaneously qualifies them for their CDL. The one
14 misconception a lot of employers have, however, is
15 that because you drove a truck in the military means
16 you want to drive a truck in the civilian world. And I
17 think that is where there's a disconnect within that
18 skills translation.

19 **MS. LONG:** Tom, can you speak to the
20 low, one-year retention rate displayed at the
21 beginning of the presentation?

22 **MR. BARTO:** On the score numbers, it's
23 really just because the program has only been in place
24 for about a year-and-a-half now and so that the
25 companies that hired those 3,300 vets haven't actually

1 kept them. They haven't been in the program for a
2 year so they haven't reported more hires than that, so
3 that's really just why that numbers kind of that low
4 right now. As we expect that number to grow over time
5 as companies report that they've kept those veterans
6 for at least a year. The recording for our program is
7 completely voluntary, so we've actually had companies
8 that have only reported once a year if they make
9 hires. You know, a lot of these companies are in the
10 small category, small to medium category, so they
11 might only hire once a year. So as they keep those
12 veterans into, move through the certification program
13 from bronze, to silver, to gold, they have to report.
14 And so we actually have a very front-loaded number on
15 the bronze side and smaller numbers in the silver and
16 gold. There's only two gold certified companies and I
17 think only about thirty or forty silvers, so of that
18 179 the rest of those companies have only pledged to
19 hire and then have reported the 3,300 jobs, actual
20 hires, so the retention number is a lagging number. I
21 understand how that can be a little disconcerting.

22 **MS. LONG:** How can we as economic
23 developers help communicate your message to our
24 existing businesses and industries?

25 **MR. BARTO:** Well, I would encourage you

1 to meet with those businesses to raise the awareness
2 about the benefits of hiring veterans, and then to
3 help them connect to the resources that are available
4 to them as Virginia employers. We do, again we do
5 learning events every other month, I'm more than happy
6 to come meet with employers or some of my teammates to
7 sit down at any kind of forum to talk about our
8 program and discuss the benefits of hiring vets. And
9 again, I encourage you to refer them to me or to the
10 vetstrong.us website so that they can learn more about
11 the program, request some training, and get educated
12 on the benefits of hiring and retaining vets.

13 **MS. LONG:** How would you rank Virginia
14 and its businesses against other states and other
15 businesses in being vet friendly?

16 **MR. BARTO:** I think the latest numbers,
17 Virginia is the, I think they're third, maybe the
18 fourth most veteran populated state in the country
19 behind California, Texas, and Florida. So I feel like
20 Virginia ranks near the top of those four states just
21 because of programs like the V3 program and the Vet
22 Strong program that have really taken a focus on
23 educating employers on the benefits of hiring vets.
24 The other thing that sets the Commonwealth apart from
25 other states in the country is the number of base

1 camps and installations in the Commonwealth. There are
2 nineteen active duty base camps and installations.
3 There's 14,000 active National Guard members, and you
4 know, thousands of reservists spread across the state,
5 so we are a very densely populated veteran's state. We
6 have a lower than average Veteran Unemployment Rate,
7 but the problem's not going to go away, so our
8 education events, training workshops are really
9 essential to help veterans, help employers understand
10 how to go find veterans. Because there's not very many
11 people who will say "No, I don't want to hire a vet,
12 but the difference is giving them the tools and
13 resources to create their own veteran recruiting
14 program as opposed to putting an ad in the paper and
15 hoping that veteran job seekers can interpret their
16 skills in a way that the employers will understand and
17 choose them out of the labor pool.

18 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Tom, this is Brent, let
19 me jump in on top of that. Those are excellent
20 remarks. One of the slides that our research division
21 prepared for us earlier in advance of this, which we
22 didn't use, but it described the various other states
23 and as you mentioned the Virginia population for
24 veterans is growing rapidly. We're among the fastest
25 growing states with nearly six to seven percent more

1 than any other state. And other states like Georgia,
2 South Carolina, Idaho, and Alaska will see between one
3 to five percent net increase in veteran population, so
4 those companies in those states would be, it would be
5 good for those companies in those states as well as
6 companies in Virginia to begin to get vet friendly and
7 to begin to become Vet Strong certified. So, I just
8 wanted to point that out that those other states are
9 close on our heels.

10 **MR. BARTO:** Absolutely.

11 **MS. LONG:** Tom, another question for
12 you. While the discharge codes are viewed by
13 employers, is any emphasis given to the awards noted
14 on the DD-214, which demonstrate the superior
15 performance in their MOS?

16 **MR. BARTO:** That's a great question, and
17 I would say with less than one percent of the American
18 population having any firsthand experience with the
19 military it's all about education, how to read that
20 DD-214, how to interpret those honors and awards, the
21 training that the veterans get while they're in the
22 military. So I would say in response to that
23 question, I think it depends on who is reviewing the
24 document. If it's someone who has had military service
25 they will be able to tell "man, that guy has a bronze

1 star, he has served honorably in combat, and has done
2 this, this, and this." So, it really depends on who's
3 reviewing and what kind of training and education the
4 H.R. and hiring managers have when reviewing those
5 military resumes, DD-214's. And many times they don't
6 even know to ask for the DD-214 to be able to tell
7 what those honors and training services they've
8 received in the military. That is one thing that we do
9 in the Vet Strong program is actually help employers,
10 train them on how to read those DD-214's, and their
11 training transcripts so that they're able to interpret
12 those training and honors and medals that a veteran
13 has had into how that can apply to their specific
14 organization.

15 **MS. LONG:** Brent, I think this last
16 question is for you. In addition to TMG, where can we
17 go for related resources and assistance?

18 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Okay, thanks for that
19 question Connie. As Tom mentioned he referenced the
20 Department of Veteran's Affairs and various other
21 agencies and I might just point out that on March 1st
22 of this year the Department of Veteran's Affairs
23 entered into an official memorandum of understanding
24 with the Virginia Employment Commission and VEC is
25 there to now execute and support the Virginia Values

1 Vets program that TMG was engaged in serving. That
2 program that TMG has been dedicated to, has served
3 over the last two years, so those statistics that you
4 see are result of what TMG has, and various other
5 partners and allies and agencies have worked to play
6 out. So, the Department of Veteran's Affairs is really
7 the management authority and the VEC assists the
8 Department of Veteran's Affairs in our departments of
9 veteran's services in training and supporting those
10 companies through their employment representatives,
11 the VEC employment representatives who are throughout
12 the Commonwealth of Virginia. There are dozens of
13 agencies and if you were to go through the, to the
14 Virginia Employment Commission website and look at
15 what is there you will also see these agencies that
16 are supportive of working with companies to become vet
17 certified and working with the recruitment and hiring
18 practices in order to enable that to occur so that's
19 where I would start.

20 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Any other questions
21 Connie?

22 **MS. LONG:** That's all we have.

23 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Okay. Thank you everyone,
24 thank you for joining us today, and Tom, thank you for
25 investing your time and energy to make this possible

1 for us to hear you today.

2 **MR. BARTO:** Well, thanks for having me.

3 I appreciate the time and again if there are questions
4 or concerns offline, please feel free to contact me.

5 **MR. SHEFFLER:** Excellent. Thank you. So
6 before we end today's session I'd like to acknowledge
7 and thank the many people and organizations who
8 contributed to make today's webinar possible. Here are
9 just some of the names of those who have served. If
10 you found this webinar to be helpful, please drop them
11 a note of appreciation. If you have a complaint,
12 please don't tell them, tell me,
13 Also I'd like to remind everyone that this session has
14 been recorded. You can go to the Virginia dot,
15 virginiaallies.org website and you can find a roster
16 of not only today's webinar when it's posted in the
17 next 48 hours, but also all the webinars that we have
18 held so far in 2013 and thus far in 2014. As we close
19 you will receive an email with a brief survey
20 requesting your feedback and for those of you who
21 registered but may not have been able to join us, well
22 then that survey may not be useful for you. Please
23 give us some feedback at any time that may be
24 convenient for you just to let us know how this
25 program is serving your needs.

1 (Refer to Exhibit-Slide-34.) Our next
2 Third Wednesday Webinar will take place on Wednesday,
3 April 16th, for the topic "Tourism in Virginia, How
4 Tourism Contributes to Economic Development." In this
5 next webinar, you will hear how Virginia's remarkable
6 history and natural resources make the Commonwealth a
7 desirable tourist location. You will also hear about
8 ways communities, entrepreneurs, and a few world-class
9 companies have created products and services that
10 compliment Virginia's competitive advantage. And what
11 does this mean to local, regional, and statewide
12 economic development agendas. Our speakers for the
13 April 16th webinar will be Steve Galyean, Director of
14 Development with the Virginia Tourism Corporation as
15 well as Wirt Confroy and Paige Worthington also with
16 the Virginia Tourism Corporation. We look forward to
17 having you with us on April 16th for the Third
18 Wednesday Webinar next month. Until then, goodbye
19 everyone and have a great day.

20 Thank you for joining us.

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