



MVO TASK FORCE CONNECT NEWSLETTER

Volume 9, August 2024

- Building partnerships
- Supporting our Veteran Business Owners
- Identifying training opportunities
- Creating valuable networking relationships



IN THIS ISSUE: FEATURED MVO TASK FORCE MEMBERS



Welcome to the MVO Task Force Connect!

August is like the grand finale of summer. We start saying our goodbyes to summer's carefree days and preparing for the busy months ahead as children get ready to return to school, gearing up for the year's biggest holidays and looking toward the start of a new year. Time continues to march on, bringing with it new days, each filled with endless exciting opportunities.

As a veteran-owned business (VOB), once you are certified by the National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC), each day is exactly like that, filled with exciting opportunities. These opportunities include taking your business to the next level, networking with hundreds of major corporations, and possibly advancing your company globally. This month, NVBDC provides yet another opportunity, executing the first of two major networking events in Detroit. Scheduled for August 8th, the "Doing Business With the Federal Reserve & Corporate America" Conference is in partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and sponsored by DTE. This event brings so much potential for our certified VOBs. Turn the page to learn more about this upcoming event and how to register.

As you continue to turn the pages, enjoy meeting four of our Task Force members. If you happen to find yourself in Tulsa, OK, stop in for a coffee and a bit of camaraderie at the Coffee Bunker. Take time to learn all about the services they offer our veterans. Meet the members of the Farmer Veteran Coalition. If you have an interest in farming and agriculture, here's the chance to learn more about this vast national network. Have you ever thought, "What's a day without golf like?" "Just kidding — I have no idea," as they would say at Links to Freedom Golf Foundation. Find out more about how this organization provides injured military service members, disabled veterans, and their immediate family members/ personal caregivers with an adaptive golf program taught by PGA and LPGA Professionals to restore a sense of freedom following life-changing events and injuries. Lastly, meet the team at Service Women's Action Network, better known as SWAN. SWAN spearheads a dynamic and engaging national movement by bringing together military women and organizations from across the country.

Check out and share all the exciting upcoming events hosted by our task force partners, and don't hesitate to register for these events today! Mark your calendars!

Together, we can achieve more for America's Heroes.

Kathryn M. Poynton, LTC (Ret.)
Director, MVO TF
NVBDC Board of Directors



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WHY VETERAN BUSINESS OWNERS SHOULD ATTEND NVBDC'S "DOING BUSINESS WITH THE FEDERAL RESERVE & CORPORATE AMERICA" CONFERENCE HOSTED BY DTE

Attention Veteran Business Owners! Are you ready to take your business to the next level? NVBDC's "Doing Business With the Federal Reserve & Corporate America" Conference, better known as the Federal Reserve Matchmaker Conference, is the event you can't afford to miss. Partnering with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and sponsored by DTE, this premier conference will be held at DTE headquarters in Detroit, Michigan, on August 8th. This is your opportunity to connect, learn, and grow your business in ways you never thought possible.

This conference provides a unique platform to network directly with procurement representatives from federal agencies and major corporations. Imagine the potential for new contracts and partnerships that could drive your business forward.

At this event, you'll be able to attend several educational workshops and panel discussions. This is an opportunity to gain invaluable insights from industry experts. Topics will include navigating federal procurement processes, enhancing your business strategies, and leveraging resources available to veteran-owned businesses. These sessions are tailored to provide you with practical knowledge to help your business thrive. During the 1:1 Matchmaking Sessions, you'll have the chance to present your business capabilities directly to decision-makers from both the public and private sectors. This is a golden opportunity to make a lasting impression and secure new business partnerships.



No conference is complete without Inspiring Keynote Speakers. This year, we are excited to welcome Todd McCracken, President of the National Small Business Association (NSBA), as our esteemed Keynote Speaker. In his keynote address, McCracken will delve into how this innovative partnership aims to empower more Veteran-Owned Businesses to thrive in both the private and public sectors. His extensive experience and vision for the future of small businesses make his presentation a must-attend for anyone looking to succeed in this competitive landscape.



For our veteran-owned businesses, this event holds countless benefits, including the ability to expand your current network through connecting with influential industry leaders and peers. It will assist with building relationships with key procurement representatives and open doors to new business opportunities and collaborations. We promise that as a veteran-owned business, you'll gain expert knowledge in strategies to enhance your business operations, understand the federal procurement processes and how to navigate them effectively.

Don't Miss Out! This is your chance to connect, learn, and grow your business. Mark your calendar and prepare to be part of a transformative experience at the NVBDC Federal Reserve Matchmaker Conference.

For more information and to register, visit NVBDC.ORG/EVENTS.

We look forward to seeing you in Detroit!

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**Dr. Michael Horton,
Executive Director of the
Coffee Bunker**



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COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT: HOW COFFEE BUNKER HELPS VETERANS CHART A PATH OUT OF MILITARY SERVICE

The Coffee Bunker’s mission is clear: to support veterans and their families in transitioning to civilian life through personal and professional development. Based in Tulsa and serving the eastern Oklahoma area, this community-minded organization focuses on five areas of service: place, community, transition services, service to community and advocacy.

The Bunker prides itself on its ability to adapt to the evolving needs of its constituency, providing vet-to-vet assistance that addresses both short-term challenges and long-term goals. From connecting veterans with resources to address immediate needs such as food and housing to helping them access benefits and employment opportunities while also serving as a community space in which they can get engaged and involved, the Bunker supports veterans, service members and their families throughout the transition to civilian life and beyond.

Dr. Michael Horton, Executive Director of the Coffee Bunker, is deeply committed to serving this veteran community, particularly those reintegrating into civilian life. He became involved with the Bunker because of its compelling mission and has been able to leverage his



extensive professional expertise to significantly impact the lives of veterans. Under his leadership, the organization aims to ensure that every veteran's transition is successful and to raise public awareness of the veteran community's needs and contributions.

Looking ahead to 2024, Coffee Bunker has ambitious plans to expand its range of support and leadership training opportunities. These initiatives aim to further enhance the resources available to veterans, helping them to achieve a successful transition and thrive in their post-military life.

Dr. Horton shares a quote from John Claypool that resonates deeply with their approach: "The fact that I do not know everything keeps me humble. The fact that I do know some things keeps me responsible." This quote encapsulates the balance of humility and responsibility that drives the Coffee Bunker's mission to support veterans and their families.



Through ongoing programs, special events, and a dedicated network of supporters, Coffee Bunker remains a vital lifeline for the veteran community. Dr. Horton and his team are steadfast in their mission to provide the necessary support for veterans to transition successfully and thrive in their civilian lives, ensuring that no veteran is left behind.



**Jeanette Lombardo, CEO
Farmer Veteran Coalition
(FVC)**



Geared to Give recipients recognized during the PBR World Finals in Dallas, TX.



2023 Farmer Veteran Coalition Stakeholders Conference in Washington, D.C.

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FROM SERVICE TO SOIL: HOW THE FARMER VETERAN COALITION CULTIVATES NEW AGRICULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS

Jeanette Lombardo, CEO of the Farmer Veteran Coalition (FVC), is at the wheel of a movement intertwining the strength of military service with the resilience of American agriculture. Her leadership is driven by a deep commitment to the active, reservist, and veteran communities, recognizing their potential to revitalize the falling number of farmers in America, revitalize rural communities, and benefit from a quality of life they are well suited to.

Jeanette's journey with FVC is deeply personal. Raised on a farm in Northwestern Pennsylvania, her roots in agriculture run deep. Decades of agricultural industry advocacy work with American Agri Women and California Women for Agriculture, state and federal appointments with the USDA and EPA, combined with her career as an agribusiness lender, laid a solid foundation for her role at FVC. With a family history rich in military service, Jeanette found a perfect fit in an organization that bridges her agricultural expertise and respect for the service of veterans.

FVC's mission, "mobilizing Veterans to feed America," speaks to the dual paths offered to its members: careers in the agricultural sector or assistance in starting their own farm or ranch business. The organization is a national nonprofit based in Waco, Texas, rapidly approaching 50,000 members. For 15 years, FVC has fostered a new generation of farmers and food leaders by developing training programs for specific jobs in the ag sector, advertising employment opportunities through a partnership with AgCareers, and assisting Veterans with starting their own farming operations.

Jeanette's vision for FVC is clear: to be lifelong partners with our Farmer Veterans on their new journey. By listening to their needs, FVC has created programs like the Fellowship Fund and Homegrown By Heroes, and made available an online sales platform called MarketMaker. Looking to the future, FVC aims to expand the Homegrown By Heroes label into the retail space and assist with sales to food banks which serve food insecure active-duty personnel.



FVC staff at the 2023 Farmer Veteran Coalition Stakeholders Conference

FVC will continue to advocate for veterans by assisting in the development of virtual co-ops by regions that will open market access by negotiating marketing agreements and discounts for members on input costs.

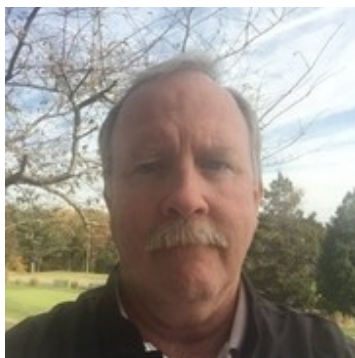
FVC is also committed to enhancing capital access program development by developing a mentoring program (internships/apprenticeships) that will assist members with achieving the required experience to be eligible to apply for USDA FSA lending. Additionally, they will be conducting outreach and education on carbon farming, and aiding members with securing funds for the installation of conservation practices on their farms and ranches.

FVC's more than 26 state chapters are designed to help farmer veterans succeed by fostering local relationships that complement the national support system. Jeanette emphasizes that all services offered to veterans are FREE, underscoring FVC's commitment to accessible support. On October 27-29, 2024, FVC is set to host its Annual Stakeholders Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, which is an incredible time of learning and camaraderie.

Brian Brett, a poet and journalist, says, in a quote that encapsulates the spirit of FVC: "Farming is a profession of hope." Under Jeanette Lombardo's leadership, the Farmer Veteran Coalition is more than an organization; it is a lifeline for veterans transitioning to civilian life, offering them a new purpose and a new mission: strengthening rural communities and creating sustainable food systems.



**Rob Koon, Chairman
Links to Freedom**



**Steve Greiner,
Executive Director &
PGA Professional,
Links to Freedom**

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GOLFING TOWARDS RECOVERY: INSIDE LINKS TO FREEDOM'S IMPACT

Links to Freedom was established to restore a sense of freedom for injured military service members and disabled veterans, many of whom struggle to find normalcy and reconnect with civilian life and their families. Focusing on the severely wounded, ill, and injured from all military branches, both active and retired, Links to Freedom uses golf as a rehabilitative tool to aid in recovery.

Links to Freedom was established in 2015 by Steve Greiner and a team of volunteers led by Rob Koon, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, with the purpose of expanding the original Fort Belvoir Wounded Warrior Golf program started by Steve in 2008. Steve's journey with the veteran community began during his tenure as the PGA Director of Golf at Fort Belvoir Golf Club, a position under the Army's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation directorate. Situated near Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Steve witnessed the profound need for a rehabilitative golf program. He saw veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with physical and mental wounds and believed golf could be a powerful tool for their recovery.

Since then, Links to Freedom has established their HERO model, which utilizes four parts: **Healthy Activities, Expand Horizons, Reintegrate, and Operationalize the Program**. These apply the physical, emotional, and social aspects of rehabilitation to help veterans break down barriers while building emotional and social connections.

Steve emphasizes the profound impact of support networks in addressing the challenges of suicide and harmful behaviors among service members. Links to Freedom focuses on bringing a sense of community and using the therapeutic nature of

golf to provide needed support to wounded, ill, and disabled veterans. The program's recognition by prestigious organizations, including the US Army, PGA of America, Jack Nicklaus, and the White House, affirm its use of golf for recovery.

For 2024, Links to Freedom has several ambitious goals and events planned. The aim is to bring the Fort Belvoir model to all Army installations focusing on recovery. Currently active at about half of the 13 installations, the organization seeks increased funding and support to expand its reach.

Fall programs start in August 2024, with the Links to Freedom Cup held on September 16, 2024, at River Creek Golf Club in Leesburg, Virginia.



Links to Freedom continues to be a beacon of hope and recovery for the military community, striving to help service members live the lives they hoped for before their injuries. Through golf, Steve Greiner and his team are making a significant difference, one swing at a time.

If you are interested in sponsoring or donating to Links to Freedom to help support their mission, please contact Steve Greiner at greiner@linkstofreedom.org or visit their website at linkstofreedom.org.



LEADING CHANGE: HOW SWAN ADVOCATES FOR SERVICE WOMEN

Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) is a dedicated advocacy organization committed to supporting service women and women veterans. SWAN focuses on amplifying the voices of service women and women veterans to improve the overall well-being of all women in the military. While women service members and veterans have benefited from innumerable support programs, the majority of them are still designed, by default, to meet the needs of men. Emphasizing that distinction, SWAN's mission is to advocate for, support, and connect military and veteran women.

SWAN drives policy change through legislative advocacy. Some key initiatives they have advocated for include the Deborah Sampson Act, the I Am Vanessa Guillen Act, and the PACT Act.

In addition to advocacy, SWAN provides support to women veterans through case management and community-building events. The organization fosters a supportive community, offering volunteer opportunities and resources to help women veterans navigate civilian life successfully. SWAN's efforts are not just about immediate support but also about creating lasting change in the lives of service women and veterans.

Elisa Cardnell, a U.S. Navy veteran, serves as SWAN's President and CEO. Transitioning from military service of five years of active duty and six years in

the Navy Reserves, Elisa joined SWAN in 2021 as the Director of Operations, becoming CEO in July 2023.

Under Elisa's leadership, SWAN continues to empower and uplift service women and veterans, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met. Looking ahead, SWAN aims to expand its impact, enhance programming for members, and deepen collaborations, creating a positive ripple effect for the military community nationwide. SWAN's commitment to service women and veterans remains steadfast, driving meaningful change and fostering a supportive environment for all its members. SWAN places a strong emphasis on community connection, offering numerous opportunities for service women and veterans to engage, network, and support one another.

Through various events, a 24/7 emergency assistance hotline, and online platforms, SWAN ensures that its members are always connected to a robust support system. This sense of community not only aids in their personal and professional development but also strengthens the overall fabric of the veteran community, making it more resilient and united.

If you would like to partner with or donate to SWAN, please email president@servicewomen.org or visit servicewomensactionnetwork.org/donate.



**Elisa Cardnell,
SWAN President and CEO**



CEO Elisa Cardnell and Director of Government Relations SSgt. Patricia Olivares on a visit to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and their staff.



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UPCOMING EVENTS & HAPPENINGS*

*LISTED ARE KNOWN UPCOMING EVENTS THROUGH AUGUST AT TIME OF PUBLICATION. ADDITIONAL EVENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE.

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2024

AUGUST 1	HYBRID BUSINESS PITCH INCUBATOR — KICK-OFF HOST: ID VETERAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	PHILADELPHIA VETERANS JOB FAIR FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	DENVER VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY
AUGUST 1-13	10TH ANNUAL RIDING FOR WARRIORS HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS		
AUGUST 3	SUMMER OPEN HOUSE HOST: CENTRAL PENN COLLEGE		
AUGUST 6	TRANSITIONING ARMY & SPOUSE VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
AUGUST 7	JOB FAIR AT NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE KINGS BAY HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
AUGUST 8	NAVAL STATION GREAT LAKES AREA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	HILL AFB AREA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
AUGUST 8	“DOING BUSINESS WITH THE FEDERAL RESERVE & CORPORATE AMERICA” CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY DTE HOST: NVBDC		
AUGUST 8	MONTHLY JOB CLUB FOR VETERANS HOST: INVESTVETS		
AUGUST 9	53RD ANNUAL CENTRAL PENN COLLEGE EDUCATION FOUNDATION GOLF OPEN HOST: CENTRAL PENN COLLEGE		
AUGUST 13	VALVOLINE — IT ALL STARTS WITH OUR PEOPLE HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
AUGUST 14	JOB FAIR AT FORT GREGG-ADAMS HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
AUGUST 15	JOB FAIR AT CAMP PENDLETON HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	JOB FAIR AT FORT LIBERTY HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
AUGUST 15	DoD SKILLBRIDGE FOR EMPLOYERS HOST: ID VETERAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	EMPLOYERS: LOGISTICS & SUPPLY PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS HOST: TROOPS2LOGISITCS	
AUGUST 21	MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA) TRAINING HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS		
AUGUST 22	DALLAS VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	BALTIMORE VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	

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AUGUST 24-26	15TH ANNUAL HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS CELEBRITY INVITATIONAL HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS		
AUGUST 27	NATIONAL VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR FOR VETERANS HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
AUGUST 28	NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE NEW LONDON AREA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
AUGUST 29	MASTERING RESOURCES: UNLOCKING THE KEYS TO SUCCESS HOST: NVBDC	INDIANAPOLIS VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
SEPTEMBER 5	JOB FAIR AT JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	GREATER SEATTLE VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	CHARLOTTE VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY
SEPTEMBER 12	BOSTON VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	ATLANTA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	MONTHLY JOB CLUB FOR VETERANS HOST: INVESTVETS
SEPTEMBER 12	SORENSEN GROSS COMPANY GOLF TOURNAMENT HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS	10TH ANNUAL PROCUREMENT SUMMIT/2024 HOST: NC VETERAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION	
SEPTEMBER 16	9TH ANNUAL L2F CUP HOST: LINKS TO FREEDOM GOLF FOUNDATION		
SEPTEMBER 18	FORT CAVAZOS AREA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY		
SEPTEMBER 19	NASHVILLE VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	GREATER CINCINNATI VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	DOD SKILLBRIDGE FOR EMPLOYERS HOST: ID VETERAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
SEPTEMBER 21	HUSKIES & HEROES HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS		
SEPTEMBER 26	JOB FAIR AT FORT DRUM HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	JOB FAIR AT FORT BLISS HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
SEPTEMBER 27	NO OBSTACLES: A RACE FOR THE WARRIORS HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS		
SEPTEMBER 30	HOOSIERS FOR HOPE GOLF TOURNAMENT HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS		
OCTOBER 1	MELISSA WASHINGTON SMALL BUSINESS AWARD – Q4 APPLICATION PROCESS OPENS HOST: WOMEN VETERANS ALLIANCE		

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OCTOBER 1	EASTERN REGION VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR FOR VETERANS HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	GOT HEART GIVE HOPE AWARDS CEREMONY HOST: HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS
OCTOBER 8	VEA FALL COHORT: INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY IN BUSINESS (RUNS THROUGH NOVEMBER 12, 2024) HOST: VETERAN ENTREPRENEUR ALLIANCE	
OCTOBER 9	SAN DIEGO VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
OCTOBER 10	COLORADO SPRINGS VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	TAMPA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY
OCTOBER 10	MONTHLY JOB CLUB FOR VETERANS HOST: INVESTVETS	
OCTOBER 17	DOD SKILLBRIDGE FOR EMPLOYERS HOST: ID VETERAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CHICAGO VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY
OCTOBER 17	JOB FAIR AT JOINT BASE LEWIS MCCORD HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	JOB FAIR AT FORT BELVOIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY
OCTOBER 19	FALL HARVEST FESTIVAL 2024 HOST: CENTRAL PENN COLLEGE	
OCTOBER 22	WESTERN VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR FOR VETERANS HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
OCTOBER 23	JOB FAIR AT FORT EISENHOWER HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
OCTOBER 24	JOB FAIR AT JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	
OCTOBER 27-29	10TH ANNUAL FVC STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE HOST: FARMER VETERAN COALITION	
OCTOBER 28	2ND ANNUAL BIRDIES & BUNKERS GOLF CLASSIC HOST: THE ROSIE NETWORK	
OCTOBER 29-30	2024 NVBDC MATCHMAKING EVENT HOST: NVBDC	
OCTOBER 31	NAVAL BASE KITSAP AREA VETERANS JOB FAIR HOST: RECRUITMILITARY	JOB FAIR AT NAVAL STATION NORFOLK HOST: RECRUITMILITARY

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Farmer Veteran Coalition
**10th annual FVC Stakeholders
 Conference**

October 27-29, 2024 in Kansas City, Missouri

LTC (Ret) Kathryn Poynton
 NVBDC Board Member

Major (Ret) Annette Stevenson
 NVBDC Board Member

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