

Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

The outlook for Veterans seeking competitive employment is looking brighter than it was just a few years ago – but we all know that more needs to be done. One trailblazer leading the way is the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry (UA), who launched the Veterans in Piping (VIP) accelerated welding training program in 2008. This program, which began in Washington State, trains and certifies Veterans to meet union standards for welding. The VIP program is truly a grassroots effort comprised of local educational institutions, equipment suppliers, partner contractors, and support from the leadership of nearby military installations including Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

The classes, which consist of accelerated 18-week courses in welding and/or heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) technical services, confer industry-recognized certifications upon graduation. Veterans taking advantage of the VIP program gain direct entry into UA apprenticeships, in which they receive advanced instruction and are paid wages for their work on par with their civilian peers. If they successfully complete their apprenticeships, they will have secured for themselves a position in a rewarding and well-paying career field. Best of all, this advanced training is paid for entirely by UA and its partners at zero cost to Veteran participants.

VA is proud to support this A-Z solution that was created with the goal of an employment end-state in mind from the start. We see this as a model that for other industry leaders will embrace and replicate across all economic sectors and across the nation.

For more information, visit <http://www.uavip.org/>

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**VA Core Values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence (“I CARE”)**

**Please Remember:**

- If you would like to review prior messages sent through this listserv, click [http://benefits.va.gov/vow/economic\\_opportunity.htm](http://benefits.va.gov/vow/economic_opportunity.htm).
- If you would like to research, find, access, and, in time, manage your VA benefits and personal information please visit and/or register at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>.
- If you looking for a job or an employer committed to hiring Veterans, please register on the Veterans Employment Center (VEC) at: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs>

- If you are seeking employment in the federal government, particularly the VA, our VA for Vets high-tech tools and resources can help. Visit online at <https://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx> or call 1-855-824-8387.

If you would like to contact us about your VA education benefits:

You can send us a secure email that will usually be answered within 48 hours. You can also search for answers to frequently asked questions and register to be notified of any updates to the information. This contact method is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can also be utilized worldwide. Click [here](#) to enter the "Ask A Question" site or [here](#) to review our frequently asked questions.

You can call 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551). This line only accepts calls from 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM central time Monday – Friday