

Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

I want to share with you some recent news relating to the “Employment Situation of Veterans - 2013” report published by the Department of Labor (Bureau of Labor Statistics) as well as the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP).

Yesterday the Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released their “Employment Situation of Veterans - 2013” report which summarized the 2013 annual data and also includes employment information on Veterans with service-connected disabilities as well as Veterans who served in the National Guard/Reserves. The data on Veterans with service-connected disabilities and those who served in the Guard/Reserves is collected once each year in August and then reported out the following March.

Some of the findings:

- WWII, Korean War, Vietnam-era Veterans are largest group (46%),
- Almost two-thirds of Veterans are age 55 and over,
- About half of Gulf War-era II (9/11/2001– present) Veterans are 25-34 years old,
- 60% of unemployed Veterans were age 45 and over,
- Veterans with service-connected disabilities had an unemployment rate of 6.2% in August 2013 compared to the 6.6% rate for Veterans with no disability,
- One in three employed Veterans with service-connected disabilities worked in the public sector compared with one in five Veterans with no disability,
- Nearly 30 percent of both Gulf War-era I and Gulf War-era II Veterans were reported to be current or past members of the Reserve or National Guard,
- Unemployment rates were similar for those who were current or past members of the Reserve or National Guard compared with those Veterans who were never members.

The complete report summary is available online at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.nr0.htm>.

### **Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) News**

Many of you have heard by now that we initiated an effort to pay VRAP participants who are currently enrolled in school receive a lump-sum benefit payment in order to finish out their current term. By statute, VA does not have the authority to make any benefit payments after March 31, 2014. As such we are calculating for all those currently enrolled a lump sum payment through the end of their current term or June 30<sup>th</sup>, whichever comes first. As of yesterday, we have already issued over 19,000 lump-sum payments totaling over \$40 million dollars.

To all Veterans who are currently receiving VRAP benefits - please keep in touch with your school certifying official both during school and after you complete your program to ensure you are properly recorded in VA systems. This information helps VA determine how beneficial programs such as VRAP are at helping Veterans obtain certificates and degrees. Additionally, when you finish your training, please remember to visit a DOL American Job Center to get started on a path towards your new career. You can locate American Job Centers in your area by going to [www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org) and entering your zip code. VRAP's success has to be measured in large part by employment, these Job Centers are here to help.

**So.... we need everyone's help to encourage/help VRAP participants complete their current term and check in with their nearest American Job Center.**

Curtis L. Coy

Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

**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 are seeking employment in the federal government, particularly the VA, our VA for Vets high-tech tools and resources can help. Visit online at <http://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, though you are able to schedule a call back from a Customer Service Representative.

---

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:

[Manage Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Help](#)

Update your subscriptions, modify your password or email address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have questions or problems with the subscription service, please visit [subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com](http://subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com).

Sent to Email Address on behalf of US Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Benefits Administration · 810 Vermont Avenue, NW · Washington, DC 20420 · 1-800-827-1000