



October 26, 1998

ASVET MEMORANDUM NO. 1-99

MEMORANDUM FOR: ALL VETS EMPLOYEES

FROM:


ESPIRIDION 'AL' BORREGO

SUBJECT: Policy on Diversity

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this memorandum is to transmit VETS' policy on diversity. Diversity has been defined as "the increase in possibilities, creativity, and energy inherent in a population of different race/ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and other characteristics."

II. Background:

Secretary of Labor, Alexis M. Herman, has stated that one of her major goals for the Department of Labor (DOL) is to foster equal opportunity workplaces throughout the nation. She believes, and I concur, that the Department of Labor should be a model employer "that not only preaches but practices inclusiveness, fairness, and the participation of all employees in all facets of the Department." She has further stated that she is "committed to ensuring that each and every opportunity that arises at DOL for hiring and advancement is at the reach of all qualified individuals, without regard to their race, ethnicity, gender, age, or disabling condition."

In October of 1997 Secretary Herman established a Diversity Task Force, composed of senior level officials. The ASVET was asked to serve in the Task Force to represent veterans. This Task Force was "to assess the status of diversity in DOL, to identify issues and challenges that may arise in achieving the goals, and to make recommendations on what improvements are needed to achieve greater diversity and equal employment opportunity in the Department."



The Secretary's vision, "we want DOL to be a workplace where everyone welcomes and appreciates the differences others bring and where people treat each other with respect--one in which all employees can make their talents and potential available to carry out the organization's mission and programs." reflects overall inclusiveness of all groups, and encourages the organization to appreciate veterans, disabled and special disabled veterans, and to appreciate employees or individuals applying for employment based on their characteristics.

The members of the Diversity Task Force solicited input and comments from employees, managers, union officials, and special interest groups of employees within and outside the Department. This effort included getting input from a veterans' group formed for this purpose. They also reviewed current data on representation rates, by agency and DOL-wide, including major occupations and various grade levels, and data on accessions, separations, and promotions.

Secretary Herman requested that the report of the Task Force be submitted to her no later than January 31, 1998. On February 6, 1998, the Department released An Equal Opportunity Workplace - Recommendations of the Secretary of Labor's Diversity Task Force to be distributed by agencies to all employees. The Task Force concluded that there were four (4) core issues to be addressed: commitment to diversity, especially by managers; career progress and development opportunities; full use of recruitment opportunities to strengthen workforce diversity; and additional services and enhanced communication. There were 44 agreed upon recommendations to address the four (4) core issues. These recommendations were grouped under five (5) overarching recommendations:

1. Communicate our values
2. Be accountable
3. Expand growth opportunities, and encourage employee self-development
4. Improve recruiting
5. Include and inform

After review, Secretary Herman approved the recommendations of the Task Force. Agency heads were then to develop and submit to the Secretary by May 15, 1998, individual Agency Action Plans to implement the report's recommendations.

On February 4, 1998, VETS submitted to the Department its Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) Plan. On May 15, 1998, VETS submitted to the Department its Equal Opportunity Plan of Action. Copies of these documents are attached to this memorandum. The VETS' plan has been approved by the Department.



III. POLICY:

VETS is fully committed to supporting the Secretary's goal of fostering equal opportunity workplaces throughout the nation. We concur with and support her desire to make DOL a model employer that not only preaches but practices inclusiveness, fairness, and the participation of all employees in all facets of the Department. Diversity and equal employment opportunity are critical elements in both of the above endeavors. VETS' policy will be to take aggressive, appropriate steps to assure that all avenues are explored and implemented that will allow us to achieve full compliance with our targeted recruitment priorities and to assure that all employees have equal employment opportunities.

IV. GUIDANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

VETS Diversity Plan of Action follows the five (5) overarching recommendations which Secretary Herman approved. Following are actions to be taken by VETS to assist us in complying with the approved recommendations:

1. Communicate our values

Provide the diversity plan to all employees; issue VETS policy and expectations; and discuss expectations with employees.

2. Be accountable

Include diversity efforts in both managers and employees (following consultation with unions) elements and standards and promote use of the Diversity Toolkit (when available) by all employees. Establish activities and/or training to address rewards and workplace values for employees.

3. Expand growth opportunities, and encourage employee self-development

Establish Individual Development Plans for employees; request funds necessary to train employees in core competencies; set aside funds to enable adequate training for employees; open all vacancies to full open competition for positions in which underrepresentation exists; and identify underrepresentation for VETS positions by group and distribute list to RAVETs. Seek opportunities to develop employees through cross-agency assignments, when possible, and continue to utilize teams and committees to provide some internal cross-training. Explore ways in which to provide more mentoring opportunities for managers and employees. Provide employees with information on the availability of services provided by the Career Assistant Centers



(CAC) nationwide and encourage them to take advantage of the CAC services.

4. Improve recruiting

Ensure all selecting officials know where underrepresentation exists; monitor presence of members of underrepresented groups applying and in certificates; and assure all selecting officials are aware of their responsibility to request from the Job Service diverse referrals for vacancies. VETS has identified underrepresentation in females and minorities and has developed recruitment methods/sources to address and correct the issue (see attached FEORP Plan). Explore ways to expand use of the Public Employment Service as a means of recruiting for vacancies. Continue to utilize the VRA authority and other flexibilities in identifying and hiring eligible applicants.

5. Include and inform

Distribute DOL Diversity Report to all employees. Distribute copies of the Secretary's recommendations to all employees, along with the FEORP and affirmative action plan.

In conclusion, all employees in VETS, regardless of position held, have a responsibility in helping VETS and the Department meet our diversity and equal employment opportunity objectives. Supervisors and managers have responsibility for providing diversity and equal employment opportunities as part of their everyday duties. Employees must also assume responsibility by taking charge of their careers by maximizing training and career development, and by continually broadening their knowledge and skills. In addition to structured training and career development classes, valuable and new information can be obtained through cross-training, working on projects in teams, learning other duties and responsibilities through details, and/or assisting co-workers in varying new assignments. Lifelong learning, whether through educational institutions or through self improvement courses, can provide rewarding opportunities to gain new or enhance current knowledge and skills. Diversity in the workforce naturally brings with it employees with different perspectives, knowledge, skills, viewpoints, and work experiences. We should take every opportunity to appreciate and learn to tolerate individual differences. Much can be learned on a day to day basis through interactions with co-workers.

VETS has some unique statutory requirements with respect to hiring that other agencies do not have which may narrow promotional opportunities for some individuals. However, we are able to provide employees with training and development opportunities for positions both within and outside of VETS. All



employees should make a commitment to pursuing these opportunities.

We have been fortunate in already completing some of the identified milestones. I hope that each of you will look forward as enthusiastically as I do to the challenges and opportunities facing us as we move ahead in this important endeavor.

VETS has been pursuing for some time a path that will earn us recognition as a "world class organization". Diversity can be an excellent tool and element in achieving this admirable goal. Each of us plays an important role and should take pride in his or her contributions towards making VETS a "world class organization", for today and for years to come.

V. INQUIRIES:

Should you have any questions or comments regarding the information contained in this memorandum they should be directed to Mr. Hary Puente-Duany, Director of the Office of Agency Management and Budget. He may be reached at 202/219-8421 or through E-Mail.

Attachments: VETS Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program
(FEORP) Plan
VETS Equal Opportunity Plan of Action



VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE
Diversity Effort
Equal Opportunity Plan of Action

Background: As part of a process started by Secretary Alexis Herman, Assistant Secretaries met and identified, in many instances with the help of diversity groups that met to identify problems and suggest courses of action, efforts that the Department and Agencies could undertake to promote workforce values related to diversity in the workforce and make DOL a model employer concerning diversity. Secretary Herman approved the recommendations. Now agencies must undertake activities that will support the Secretary's vision of DOL as a model employer that not only preaches, but practices inclusiveness, fairness, and the participation of all employees in all facets of the Department.

Plan of Action:

1. Communicate to all employees the vision for DOL as an equal opportunity workplace and its commitment to diversity.

Diversity is the increase in possibilities, creativity, and energy inherent in a population of different race/ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation and other characteristics, including veteran and disabled veteran status.

A. Communicate the DOL workplace values to all employees:

1. To attract people with ability, dedication, and capacity for growth;
2. To provide opportunity for employees to use their individual talents and diligence to develop themselves for available opportunities;
3. To create an environment that values diversity and fosters mutual respect and cooperation among all persons;
4. To act in all workplace decisions on the belief that employees are a vital resource in any 21st century enterprise and that investment in all employees is essential to accomplishing the DOL mission;
5. To be inclusive, partnering with our unions, employee groups, and managers in planning and implementing change; and
6. To hold ourselves standards and expectations – of equity, diversity, accessibility, safety, and family friendliness – at least as stringent as those we enforce in our work.

Status: Although some of the concepts embodied in the Diversity effort have been communicated to employees in the past, the Secretary's Diversity effort brings all these together and adds others that add value to the organization and the accomplishment of its mission.

Action item:	milestone (end date):	process	Responsible Official:
Communicate effort to all employees	September 30, 1998	Issue plan, provide to all employees	Director, OAMB
Commit employees to effort	September 30, 1998	Issue ASVET memorandum to all employees expressing VETS policy and expectations	ASVET
Ensure employees understand concepts and expectations	November 10, 1998	RAVETs issue guidance on, or discuss, their expectations to employees	RAVETs

2. Be Accountable

- A. Include diversity efforts and accomplishments on managers' performance standards
- B. Include items regarding diversity efforts in employee performance standards after consultation with unions.
- C. Establish activities and/or training to address rewards and workplace values for managers and employees.

Status: VETS' performance standards for managers already had meeting equal employment opportunity goals as part of human resource management. The Diversity effort would go beyond this to provide more detail on Departmental and VETS expectations for furthering the diversity of the agency's employees.

Action item	Milestone	Process	Responsible Official
Include diversity efforts and specific standards in Managers performance standards	May 29, 1998	Include elements addressing diversity expectations and expected achievements in Managers performance standards	Director, OOP RAVETs
Include diversity efforts and values in specific standards for employees	May 29, 1998 June 30, 1999	Consult with local 12 and NCFL on standard value and activity performance standards Include diversity elements in employees' performance standards	Director, OAMB Director, OOP All Managers
Promote use of Diversity Toolkit throughout the agency	90 days after its available		Director, OAMB
Reward system recognizes manager and employee contributions to diversity and workplace values.	Completed June, 1998 May, 1999	Ensure managers standards contain an element that includes diversity efforts and support Ensure RAVETS establish activities and/or training to address rewards for diversity efforts or recognition of the value of diverse workplaces or contributions of employees	RAVETS and N.O. Managers RAVETS

3. Expand growth opportunities and encourage employee self-development.
 - A. Expand employee training opportunities and enable employees to obtain training that develops core competencies
 - B. Expand employee development opportunities - use special assignments, project leadership, teams, committees, details, and job exchanges to enhance career development of employees and provide cross-training.

- C. Continue to expand avenues for support staff to prepare themselves to move out of obsolete positions.
- D. Review and assure fairness in the selection and promotion process. VETS should make sure that vacancy announcements are accessible to all employees, that KSAs required are consistent with the position, that rating panels show diversity, and that VETS makes every effort to make sure that underrepresented groups get to apply and appear on certificates.
- E. Explore ways in which VETS can provide more mentoring opportunities for both managers and employees.
- F. Provide employees with information on the availability of services provided by the Career Assistance Centers.

Status: VETS' has been aggressive on giving training to its employees on mission-related requirements and has relied on the National Veterans' Training Institute to give training to its employees to make sure they could perform their work. Similarly, VETS uses special assignments, project leadership and the use of task groups, cluster groups and Committees to accomplish its mission. VETS also identified positions that could be upgraded based on work requirements (Clerical support staff to Directors of Veterans' Employment and Training) and added technical duties to the position descriptions in those States where the workload supported the upgrade. Final approval for this effort was obtained in October 1997. Most of the Veterans' Program Assistant positions (44 positions out of 52) were upgraded from GS-5 or 6 to GS-7, this resulted in 39 female employees getting these newly created opportunities.

Similarly, in its National Office, VETS provided all clerical staff with the opportunity to compete for higher graded quasi-administrative positions that took into account the impact caused by automation and professional staff using computers to produce outputs. A total of seven positions were redescribed by incorporating higher level duties and diminishing the clerical or secretarial functions consistent with VETS' use of personal computers to get work accomplished. These positions were announced for competition as part of the VETS National Office reorganization. Once the new positions were filled, emphasis was placed on helping employees follow Individual Development Plans that led, upon completion of training and assignments, to the higher grades for the positions. Both Agency efforts were fully implemented in FY 1998.

Action item:	milestone (end date):	process	Responsible Official:
Compile information for employees about core competencies/career paths for major occupations.	Ongoing	NVTI provides core competencies relative to established courses. VETS has identified additional core competency training needs and has provided budget resources to accomplish (See below).	RAVETS and N.O. Managers
Managers review employees IDPs and submit training needs to Regional Administrators	August 28, 1998	Establish Individual Development Plans when employees do not have one; request funds to enable employees to fulfill IDP training	DVETs
Request funds to train employees in core competencies	September 30, 1998	Submit, as part of Annual Work Plans, funds necessary to ensure employees obtain core competencies	RAVETS
Set aside reasonable funds to ensure that employees can participate in training	October 15, 1998	Identify critical needs and set aside funds to enable adequate training to be provided to employees	Director, OAMB Director, OOP
Announce all vacancies with sufficient time to recruit for applicants from groups that are underrepresented in VETS	Continuous	Open all vacancies to full and open competition for positions in which underrepresentation exists	Director, OOP
Identify by grade/series positions in which underrepresentation exists by group	May 29, 1998	Identify underrepresentation for VETS positions by group, distribute list to RAVETS	Director, OAMB

Promote wider participation in mentoring by managers and employees.	May, 1999	Explore ways in which VETS can provide more mentoring opportunities for both managers and employees.	All Managers
Encourage greater employee use of Career Assistant Centers.	January, 1999	Provide employees with information on the availability of services provided by the Career Assistance Centers.	All Managers

4. Improve recruiting

- A. Develop annual plans of targeted recruitment. Identify positions in which underrepresentation exists and communicate to selecting managers their responsibility to make sure that members of such underrepresented groups are sought to be candidates for VETS' vacancies.
- B. Monitor the presence of underrepresented groups during selection (both applicants and those in certificates)
- C. Request assistance from State Job Services to ensure that candidates from underrepresented groups apply for VETS' vacancies. Coordinate with local Job Service offices to make sure that candidates applying for vacancies are diverse and that VETS selecting officials seek members from underrepresented groups for vacancies.
- D. Continue to use VRA authority and explore other flexibilities in identifying and hiring eligible applicants.

Status: VETS has continuously made efforts to increase the diversity of its employees and has had some success in the past. Previous efforts were predicated on making sure that our efforts to help veterans took into account the diverse experience that different groups could bring to VETS in helping veterans. NVTI has already developed diversity training to make sure our VETS-funded State-employed Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives are aware of the needs of different groups and how their life-experiences affect their job seeking and career planning habits. Similarly, efforts were undertaken to increase female veteran representation in VETS' key occupations with some success.

Action item:	milestone (end date):	process	Responsible Official:
Ensure all selecting officials know where underrepresentation exists	June 30, 1998	Distribute FEORP underrepresentation information to all RAVETs	Director, OAMB
Monitor presence of members of UR groups applying and in certificates	July 30, 1998	Coordinate with Office of Human Resources to obtain reports on applicants, candidates in certificates and selections	Director, OAMB
Ensure all selecting officials are aware of their responsibility to request from JS diverse referrals for vacancies	May 29, 1998	Brief all managers during RAVET Conference in May 1998	Director, OAMB Director, OOP
Develop a talent bank of recruiters	Ongoing	Continue to explore ways to expand use of the Public Employment Services as a means of recruiting for vacancies.	All Managers
Expand use of effective authorities and programs to improve diversity.	Ongoing	Continue to utilize the VRA authority and other flexibilities in identifying and hiring eligible applicants.	All Managers

5. Include and inform.

- A. Communicate the VETS' action plan, FEORP and diversity plan to all employees.
- B. Seek contributions from employees and managers

Action item:	milestone (end date):	process	Responsible Official:
Distribute DOL Diversity Report	June 30, 1998	Obtain copies of the Secretary's Recommendations and distribute to all VETS employees along with FEORP and Affirmative Action Plan.	Director, OAMB

FEDERAL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITMENT PROGRAM (FEORP) PLAN

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES

AGENCY: DOL - Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: FY 1998
 CONTACT'S NAME: Hary Puate-Duany TELEPHONE NUMBER: 219- 6350

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES TARGET GROUP(S)	GRADE LEVEL(S)	OCCUPATION(S)	RECRUITMENT METHODS/SOURCES	TARGET DATE
Black Males/Females Females	GS-12/15 *GS-14 *GS-13 *GS-12	301 Veterans' Employment Specialist	VETS has sufficient diversity in its current workforce to be able to reach its goals by use of the following methods: *Training, including but not limited to, Supervisory/Managerial *Availability of PCS funds to allow for movement of staff *Utilizing Job Service and its veterans inventory to meet legislative requirements of veterans status and residency *Visibility assignments *Details and rotational assignments	End of FY 1999
Hispanic	GS-5/7	303 Veterans' Program Assistant		

FEDERAL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITMENT PROGRAM (FEORP) PLAN

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES

AGENCY: DOL - Employment Standards Administration (ESA) PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: FY 1998
 CONTACT'S NAME: Carvin Cook TELEPHONE NUMBER: 219- 8741

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES TARGET GROUP(S)	GRADE LEVEL(S)	OCCUPATION(S)	RECRUITMENT METHODS/SOURCES	TARGET DATE
Women	GS-5/7/9	Wage and Hour Compliance Specialist (249)		FY 1998
Asians/Pacific Islanders	GS-5/7/9	Workers' Compensation Claims Examiners (991)		FY 1998
Women	GS-5/7/9	Investigators (1801)		FY 1998

The above information reflects recruitment priorities only -- not a complete list of all underrepresented groups. ESA will continue its outreach efforts for all groups for which underrepresentation exists. Outreach efforts will also continue for persons with disabilities, including persons with targeted disabilities and disabled veterans.

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES

AGENCY: DOL - Office of the Solicitor (SOL) PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: FY 1998

CONTACT'S NAME: Rebecca Miller TELEPHONE NUMBER: 219- 5276 x169

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES TARGET GROUP(S)	GRADE LEVEL(S)	OCCUPATION(S)	RECRUITMENT METHODS/SOURCES	TARGET DATE
Asians/Pacific Americans		Attorney (905)		FY 1998

The above information reflects recruitment priorities only -- not a complete list of all underrepresented groups. SOL will continue its outreach efforts for all groups for which underrepresentation exists. Outreach efforts will also continue for persons with disabilities, including persons with targeted disabilities and disabled veterans.

FEDERAL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITMENT PROGRAM (FEORP) PLAN

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES

AGENCY: DOL - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN: FY 1998

CONTACT'S NAME: Pat Saturen

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 219- 8006

RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES TARGET GROUP(S)	GRADE LEVEL(S)	OCCUPATION(S)	RECRUITMENT METHODS/SOURCES	TARGET DATE
Females Hispanics Asians/ Pacific Islanders	GS-7 through 14	50 Safety and Occupational Health Specialist (018)		FY 1998
Females Hispanics Asians/Pacific Islanders Native Americans	GS-7 through 14	52 Industrial Hygienists (690)		FY 1998
Asians/Pacific Islanders Native Americans	GS-9/14	4 Program and Management Analysts (343)		FY 1998
Asians/Pacific Islanders		19 Clerical series		FY 1998

The above information reflects recruitment priorities only -- not a complete list of all underrepresented groups.

OSHA will continue its outreach efforts for all groups for which underrepresentation exists. Outreach efforts will also continue for persons with disabilities, including persons with targeted disabilities and disabled veterans.