



VETBIZ

THE VETERAN BUSINESS PORTAL OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

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Welcome to VetBiz

A Message From the Center –

Welcome to the inaugural issue of VetBiz, electronic news for veterans in the Federal marketplace. In each issue of VetBiz, we will:

- ? Highlight veteran-owned business successes
- ? Celebrate our advocates
- ? Inform you about changing rules
- ? Examine veteran participation in selected industries

VetBiz is being distributed to VA's Acquisition community and key executives; the SBA's Veterans Business Development Officers and headquarters' staff; Government Advocates for Veterans Enterprise; Corporate Advocates for Veterans Enterprise; the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, the Task Force for Veterans Entrepreneurship and the staff of the National Veterans Business Development Corporation. Feel welcome to forward this to any interested parties. To be added to our automatic distribution list, please send a message to VACVE@mail.va.gov, subject: VetBiz Mailing List

The week of May 7 has been selected as National Small Business Week. The Bureau of

the Census estimates there are about 22 million businesses in America, including 5.5 million owned by veterans. This year for the first time, Federal agencies are actively seeking opportunities to award contracts to businesses owned by service-disabled veterans. Large Federal contractors are seeking opportunities to work with veteran-owned businesses and with firms owned by service-disabled veterans. In VA, our goal is to expand the number of veterans in business. In future issues, we'll report on the growing network of advocates promoting veterans' entrepreneurship.

Some exciting news for our readers – The National Veterans Business Development Corporation is open for business! See the box article elsewhere in this issue for specific information on how to contact them.

VetBiz is published by VA's new Center for Vet-



Scott Denniston, Director
Center for Veterans Enterprise

erans Enterprise, an office dedicated to helping veterans establish or expand a business. We encourage you to visit our web site at <http://www.vetbiz.gov>. Give us some feedback, recommend links you'd like to see, tell us what types of services will help you. From speaking with veterans and vets' advocates across the country, we understand there's some confusion about the Federal Veterans Entrepreneurship program. So, our first issue will concentrate on eligibility, answering two basic questions – Who's a Veteran and Who's a Service-Disabled Veteran. Let us know what types of questions you'd like to see addressed in future issues.

Scott Denniston
Director



*Mr. Michael Bracey,
formerly with the
Department of Veterans
Affairs, is the Acting
Executive Director. Of the
NVBDC.*



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the minimum disability rating I need to declare myself as a service-disabled veteran?

Public Law 106-50, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999, does not require any minimum rating. A veteran with a zero percent rating letter is eligible to self-represent as a service-disabled veteran for Federal contracting purposes.

What type of documentation do I need?

Federal solicitations contain a provision for veterans to self-represent their status. For prime contract actions with Federal agencies, an owner self-represents his or her status by acting on the "Small Business Program Representation, FAR 52.219-1," or the "Offeror Representations and Certifications – Commercial

Items, FAR 52.212-3." Your signature on the offer is all you need to be eligible for Federal contracting.

If you have questions for Vet-Biz, please contact us at VACVE@mailva.gov.

Or write

*CVE (00VE)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420*



Public Law 106-50 established the National Veterans Business Development Corporation (NVBDC). The President appoints the voting Members of the Board of Directors. On the Vetbiz web site, you will find background information on each of the Directors.

Mr. Michael Bracey, formerly with the Department of Veterans Affairs, is the Acting Executive Director. The main functions of the NVBDC are:

? Establish and maintain a network of information and assistance centers for use by vet-

erans and the public;

- ? Organize public and private resources to assist veterans with the formation and expansion of small businesses; and
- ? Establish a Professional Certification Advisory Board to create uniform guidelines and standards for the professional certification of members of the Armed Services to aid in their efficient and orderly transition to civilian occupations and professions and to remove potential barriers in the areas of licensure and certification.

Here's how to contact the Corporation:

Mailing Address:

NVBDC
1050 Connecticut Ave.
NW. (10th Floor)
Washington, D.C. 20036

Telephone:

(202) 772-4150

Fax:

(202) 772-3101

E-mail:

Valerie Rosinski –
vrosinski@regususa.com

An Enterprising Veteran's Story - Randy Slager and Catapult Technology

Randy J. Slager was commissioned a bio-medical information systems officer in 1975, as the US withdrew from Viet Nam. He was assigned to the 7th Medical Command in Germany where he sustained a spinal injury in a training accident in 1978. Capt. Slager, spent 9 months in hospitals in Germany and Denver undergoing 2 back operations with permanent damage to his lower spine and to the nerves to the right leg. His limited duty profile essentially ended a promising military career.

He completed a master's degree under a VA rehabilitation program while he developed his programming skills working for Sperry-Univac. In 1982, he accepted a position with the FBI in Washington, DC. Later, he left the Bureau and moved to the contractor arena where he was able to effectively hide his disability. During that time he was successful at developing federal contracting opportunities. His condition started deteriorating in 1995 timeframe, a year before founding Catapult Technology. First, with an apparent limp and the need to keep rotating positions sitting and standing, and then finally the need to use a cane for prolonged standing. The Department of Transportation (DOT) provided Catapult its first opportunities. Marketing efforts to develop business outside of DOT shifted from discussing company capabilities in 1994 to extended discussions of Slager's physical disability. It soon became clear that anyone with a spinal injury is considered a high business risk and should be avoided.

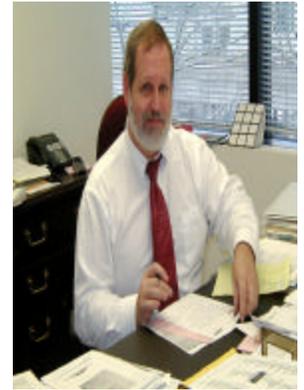
In July 1998, Catapult applied and was subsequently denied admission to the SBA 8(a) Business Development Program. It appeared that the SBA still applied the more stringent requirements in place before the Adarand Supreme Court ruling. In a meeting with SBA legal, it was suggested that he wait a year, further documenting his case, and then pursue small disadvantaged business (SDB) certification prior to reapplying to the 8(a) Program. We also found that although we had an excellent credit rating, banks routinely they us we "did not fit their lending profile".

Later in 1998, Slager attended a VA small business conference in Baltimore and found that he was the only disabled veteran business owner present. Mr. Anthony J. Principi presented preliminary findings from the report that the Congressional Commission of Servicemembers and Veterans Transition Assistance had been preparing. Afterwards, I was able to speak with him and relate my experiences as well as to further discuss what the commission was recommending to open the Federal market to disabled veteran entrepreneurs. "I followed the legislation and secured my representative's commitment to co-sponsor it."

Catapult applied for its SDB certification in March 2000. In May, I was invited by SBA to attend an SDB daylong workshop where he spoke to Mr. Mario Trevino, Acting Assistant Administer for SBA's SDB Certification Program. He was able to relate his experiences in applying to the 8a program to him. Mr. Trevino's assistance kept discussions going until SBA legal finally concurred -- after I secured witness statements confirming my experiences. In September 2000, Catapult finally received its SDB certification. Having been certified as socially disadvantaged by SBA, the firm submitted it's 8(a) Application the following week. The

process took from October through March. Being one of the first with disability discrimination required that every detail of the application be clearly documented. Business viability became the issue that delayed the process. It's a "catch 22" item. If you have been discriminated against then your business success has, by the very nature of the situation, been severely constrained. Yet the program requires that you demonstrate that you have a successful track record and are positioned to succeed. We were able to show that since receiving the SDB certification, Catapult secured significant new business and was admitted into the DOT short-term lending program thus providing access to a credit line at attractive terms.

The process for service disabled veteran business owners is improving as awareness and attitudes change at SBA. The transition from "clear and convincing" to a "preponderance of evidence" standard, has made significant progress at SBA. Firms must document their experiences. The VA has been actively promoting goals for contracting with disabled veterans for years with marginal success. The OSDBU at VA was very helpful in providing data that supported general discrimination in the Federal sector against disabled veterans. Make use of this supporting data but your personal experiences will make or break the case. The OSDBU staff offered strong encouragement along the way. Take advantage of their assistance. Persistence is the key to admission in the SDB and 8(a) programs.



Randy Slager, President /CEO
Catapult Technology, an 8(a) SDVB

"....SBA legal finally concurred -- after we secured witness statements confirming our experiences."



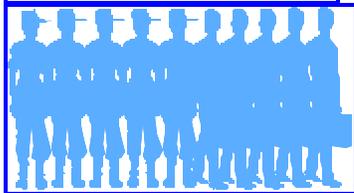
<http://www.catapulttechnology.com/>



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Veterans In Business...
Still Serving America



Hope to See You At
One of These
Conferences



ELIGIBILITY

The Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has been in operation since December 2000. We help veterans, and service-disabled veterans, who are interested in opening or expanding a business. We also help veterans seeking prime and subcontracting opportunities in Federal markets. Scott Denniston is the Director of the Center. He reports to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Our work is based, in part, in the responsibilities outlined in Public Law #106-50, the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999. An eligible veteran must have served:

? Active Duty

A Veteran is a person who served in the **active** military, naval or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

Active duty service is defined as active duty in the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard or Coast Guard for any length of time and at any place home and abroad.

? Reserve and National Guard

Active service includes (1) active duty, (2) any period of active duty for training during which a person is disabled from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty and (3) any period of **inactive duty** training during which a person is disabled from an injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

If called to **active** duty, the reservist or National Guard must be called under 10 U.S.C., which states that the service must be characterized as Federal Active Duty.

Non-Eligible Categories

The following types of service are **not** considered military service: (1) civilian employees of the armed services or volunteers for the Red Cross, USO, Public Health Service, or War or Defense Department; (2) those whose service was limited to National Guard Units (except when units were called to active duty, as during World War II and the Korean War); (3) those whose service consisted only of reserve training such as duty for 2 weeks during the year or attendance at weekly reserve meetings; and (4) those who served only in the armed forces of a foreign country.

51% Rule To declare your firm as a veteran owned business, a veteran or group of veterans must have **51%** ownership and control of the business. A similar 51% rule is applied to businesses owned by service-disabled veterans.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES	Date(s)
34 th National Joint Industry/SBA Procurement Conference, Washington, DC (SB Week Event)	5/7-9/01
TRIAD Spring Meeting, Washington, DC	5/7/01
San Diego Minority Supplier Development Council Operation Opportunity Conference	5/8/01
Rep. Louise Slaughter's Federal Contracting Conference, Rochester, NY	5/8/01
PTAC Alliance North 2001 (w/SBDC, SBA), Anchorage, AK	5/17-18/01
DLA Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV	5/22/01
WV Teaming To Win Conference, Fairmont, WV	5/31/01
Rep Ike Skelton Procurement Conference, Warrensburg, MO	5/31/01
VA-USAF Veterans Business Conference, West Los Angeles, CA	6/4-6
Special Operations Command (SOCOM)/DCMC Veterans Business Conference, St. Petersburg, FL	6/7-8/01
US Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen's Small Business Conference, Picatanny, NJ	6/15/01
Congressman Allen Boyd's Small Business Conference, Panama City, FL	6/17-18/01
DoD Joint Regional (NorthCentral, SouthCentral & Pacific Northwest) Council for Small Business and Advocacy Conference, Mesa, AZ	6/18-20/01
DoD WRC Navy Gold Coast Conference, Ventura Beach, CA	6/20-21/01
PTAC-VA Veterans Business; Springfield, MA	6/22/01
VA-DoD-TRICARE Conference, Orlando, FL	6/25-29/01
USAF Academy & CO Springs Chamber of Commerce SB Day, CO Springs, CO	6/29/01
PTAC-VA Veterans Business Conference, Indianapolis, IN	8/13-14/01
PTAC-VA Veterans Business Conference, Portland, ME; VA co-sponsor	9/10-13/01