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VA supports women Veteran entrepreneurs in how to obtain government contracts

WASHINGTON — Graduates from the Department of Veterans Affairs' [Women Veteran-Owned Small Business Initiative](#) recently finished the VetBizLadyStart program, paving a way for [their future in the federal marketplace](#).

The inaugural 14-week program, completed in early February, provided women transitioning out of the military, tools and resources to manage and grow their small businesses in government contracting.

Training modules and small group discussions were hosted by successful women mentors from the government and commercial sector. The initiative works to bridge the gap between economic disparities by providing disadvantaged populations equal access to contracts.

President of WJM Professional Services LLC Veronica Lane, was one of 20 women Veterans who participated in the sessions.

"I am grateful for completing this program and the opportunity to meet with motivated women Veterans," Lane said. "My goals were to ramp up and receive four contract awards and apply for an increased line of credit from my business banker — and I was able to accomplish both!"

VA Chief of Staff Tanya Bradsher attended the ceremony. "The graduation marks a step toward fulfilling President Biden's Executive Order [Advancing Racial Equity in Underserved Communities](#)," Bradsher said. "What better way to answer the call than a program that brings results for our women Veterans, who in turn can use these tools to become successful business contractors, bringing opportunities back to those in their communities."

The EO aims to identify and remove barriers in the federal government that impact the ability of individuals within underserved socioeconomic categories to seek viable economic opportunities.

According to the Small Business Administration, [only 15% out of 2.5 million](#) Veteran-owned business are owned by women Veterans. The Women Veteran-Owned Small Business Initiative, part of VA's [Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization](#), is focused on using VetBizLadyStart to increase awareness of opportunities for women-owned small businesses to increase these numbers.

VetBizLadyStart is a federally funded program and collaborates with the Women's Business Centers of the [District of Columbia](#), [Maryland](#) and Virginia's [Old Dominion University](#). Entrepreneurship programs are offered through each organization to assist women in preparing for procurement.

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