

PROGRAM HELPS OLDER VETS



Cheryl Blackburn is a veteran of the United States Army and ended up losing the job she had, in which she worked as a leasing consultant. After losing her job, she had been continuously searching for new employment, but found that it was quite frustrating. Blackburn says that she wanted to work back in a government setting but everyone kept telling her that she would need to obtain a degree in order to have a government job. In the past, Blackburn did work for the State Department. She says that she had the right kind of experience they were looking for but without the degree, she could not find the type of job she wanted to have. And while Blackburn, who happens to be 51 years of age, is having a hard time finding employment, there is good news ahead. She has recently joined the new program that has been offered to her by the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as the Labor Department, in which the two are working together to help train older veterans so that they can receive employment for jobs that are currently in high demand. The program is referred to as the Veteran Retraining Assistance Program, in which unemployed veterans over the age of 35 can receive help and assistance with retraining so that they can find employment. This program has been created in part of the Vow to Hire Heroes Act, which was signed by President Barack Obama in 2011. Blackburn is hoping that through the program, she will be able to earn a degree from a university or community college. In the meantime, the Veterans Affairs Secretary, Eric K. Shinseki, says that this program is a way to serve to those who have already served for our country, helping them to receive the type of education and training that they need in order to have success in the job market and find the employment they have been seeking. The program launched on May 15th. The focus has been put primarily on those who served more recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, as these are the veterans who are dealing with the highest numbers of joblessness. Unemployment of veterans is high, especially while the economy is still under recovery and it is even higher for veterans who are between the ages of 35 and 60, which is troublesome. These veterans need to be prepared and learn new skills so that they no longer have to struggle. It is important that they are able to find good jobs, especially during a time in which finding employment can be so difficult. After the veterans complete the training process, the Labor Department has vowed to help them find jobs that match up with the skills they have recently acquired. This program will make a huge difference in the lives of many.

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