

# Veteran Fast Launch Initiative

HELPING VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES  
START AND GROW SMALL BUSINESSES



## Chapter Guide

VI.0 - August 2011

# About the Initiative

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Every year, over 180,000 dedicated men and women exit our nation's armed services after their loyal service to our nation. SCORE stands ready to answer the call of helping our veterans to transition into life as entrepreneurs.

## Background

Through the Veteran Fast Launch Initiative, SCORE is taking part in First Lady Michele Obama and Dr. Jill Biden's Joining Forces Initiative, a program designed to improve support for our service members and their families. As part of this program, SCORE will reach out to provide mentoring, tools, and training to military personnel and their families who want to use their special skills and knowledge to start or grow their own small business.

Joining Forces is a comprehensive national initiative to mobilize all sectors of society to give our service members and their families the opportunities and support they have earned. In this ongoing effort, the First Lady and Dr. Biden will highlight issues that are of special importance to the military families they have met with across the country, including the areas of employment, education, and wellness.

## Program Components

- Free software and online services
- SCORE Workshop Scholarships to attend Simple Steps for Starting Your Business or an equivalent program offered by the chapter
- Web based workshops, tools, templates and white papers for starting your business
- Free personal business advice from SCORE mentors

## Sponsors & Partners

### Primary Sponsor



On Veterans Day 2010, the Walmart Foundation announced a five-year, \$10 million commitment to support military and veteran employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Part of that commitment included a generous donation by the Walmart Foundation in support of the new Veteran Fast Launch Initiative.

The program will help accelerate veterans' ability to start a business and succeed as small business owners. In 2011, SCORE will provide mentoring and training services to over 16,000 veterans, yielding an estimated 3,000 business start-ups. Training and mentoring will also be available to the families of veterans.

## **Technology & Business Partners**

Our technology and business partners believe in helping our nation's veterans and their family members start and grow businesses. Our partners have generously agreed to provide free-use and free-trial services of their products. The Veteran Fast Launch website will offer valuable tools, services and resources to help provide veterans and their family members a leg up in starting their businesses, and in time, increase sales, customers, and profits.



All partner offers can be viewed in the "Special Offers" section of the program website: [www.vetsfastlaunch.org](http://www.vetsfastlaunch.org)

## **Educational Partners**

As part of the new initiative, SCORE plans to partner with other nonprofit and government agencies to ensure that these tools and services are a known resource for our nation's veterans and their family members. These partners are critical in helping to build awareness of the program and offering these services to their constituents.

We are pleased to announce that our inaugural educational partner for this new initiative is the Veterans' Business Outreach Center (VBOC). Through their support, all 16 VBOC's will promote this program to the 45,000 veterans they service annually.

# Program Logistics for Chapters

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Veterans and their family members who print the workshop scholarship coupon from the vetsfastlaunch.org can redeem it at any SCORE chapter. They can use it towards the Simple Steps for Starting Your Business program or any other workshop(s) they want up to the maximum value of the coupon.

Chapters may provide the veteran selected workshop series at no charge to veterans and their families (spouse, mother, father, brother, sister) and opt to be reimbursed by the SCORE national office under the terms of the Vets Fast Launch program. Chapters that do not want reimbursement but want to serve the Vets through the program are free to do so. Their impact will be great as it will allow for more Veterans to be helped.

Should your chapter want to be reimbursed, a reimbursement per workshop attendee will be given to cover the per client hard cost for the selected workshop. As an example, if your hard cost per user is \$50, you will be reimbursed \$50. If your hard cost per user is \$110, then you will be reimbursed \$110. The reimbursement amount cannot be higher than \$125 per attendee.

The number of scholarships is not limited per chapter. However, the program budget has a limit on available funds that have been provided and thus, the SCORE Foundation will monitor the overall financial expenditures and manage expenses against the sponsor's budgeted commitment. The scholarships will no longer be available once the program budget has been depleted. It is estimated that the program budget will allow for about 2,000 scholarships. The exact amount is difficult to forecast due to the varying hard costs per chapter.

## Program Marketing

A program marketing package is being developed and will be made available in September. It is expected to include the following:

- Program presentation to be used for local partnerships
- Program promotional poster, flyer and brochure
- Program banner to be used for online promotion

# Program Logistics for Clients

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**Below is a description that shows how this process will work:**

**Step 1:** Client visits program website and downloads a coupon that will be good for 90 days and that looks like the one below:



**Step 2:** Client will be invited to register for the workshop using Chapter’s normal process (phone, email, online form).

**Step 3:** Client attends workshop and gives Chapter the coupon in lieu of payment. Chapter must collect coupon.

**Step 4:** To claim reimbursement, Chapter Fills out Form I4A (Expense Voucher Reimbursement) and attaches coupon to it.

An Expense Voucher (Form I4A) and a copy of the coupon(s) must be submitted for reimbursement. On the form I4A, please be sure to mention “Veteran Fast Launch” and include the attendee name(s) and the voucher serial number. Multiple coupons may be listed on one form and the collected coupons should be attached to the same form.

The form and coupon should then be sent to the national office at 1175 Herndon Parkway, Suite 900, Herndon, VA 20170. Reimbursement will be processed in about 2 weeks and a check will be mailed to the chapter.

A sample of Form I4A is attached.

# FAQ's

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1. My chapter does not offer the “Simple Steps for Starting Your Business” workshop series. Can I participate in this program?

**Yes, you can participate in this program and allow Veterans and their immediate family members to use their coupon to register for any workshop that will help them start or grow their business, up to financial limits described previously.**

2. Can I be reimbursed if a veteran participates in a workshop that is similar to Simple Steps for Starting Your Business, but has some difference in name or content?

**Yes, you can be reimbursed for any workshop that will help a veteran or their family members start or grow a business.**

3. Do I need to have proof that the participant is a veteran or the family member of a veteran?

**SCORE will not require submission of proof. The attendee will have claimed their veteran or family member status on the web site in order to obtain the coupon. We will accept this attestation. Chapters are free to ask for reasonable additional proof if they see a need for it.**

4. Our Chapter wants to be part of this program without seeking any reimbursement. Is that possible?

**Yes, it is possible and will allow for more Veterans to obtain the much needed help to start and grow businesses.**

5. Our chapter does not charge for workshops, but has a cost associated with running them. Can we be reimbursed for those per-person costs?

**No. This reimbursement offer is only valid for chapters that will incur a loss in revenue due to the use of the coupon.**

6. Is there a limit on how many clients we can be reimbursed for?

**There is no limit to the number of scholarships per chapter as long as the**

**overall program still has funding available. We will keep track of costs and results and inform chapters if funding gets close to depletion.**

7. What happens when the budget runs out?

**We will monitor usage and budget impact on a regular basis to keep a tab on available funding to continue offering the scholarships. Our funders will be kept informed on the progress of the scholarship budget and we will try our best to keep the program alive for as long as possible. If further funding is not forthcoming, we will inform all chapters in advance of the end date with a strategy to terminate our outreach.**

## Contacts & Resources

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### Contacts:

- Jai Hokimi, Director, Education & Partnership Services, [Jai.Hokimi@score.org](mailto:Jai.Hokimi@score.org)
- Mike Townshend, Senior Project Manager, Veteran Fast Launch Initiative, [Michael.Townshend@score.org](mailto:Michael.Townshend@score.org)

### Links of Interest:

- [www.vetsfastlaunch.org](http://www.vetsfastlaunch.org)
- <http://www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces>
- <http://www.volunteercenter.score.org/forms.html>

