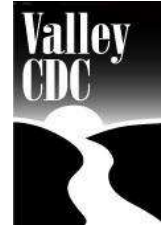


# Valley CDC Launching Free Support Program for Veterans To Help Them Launch Their Own Businesses



Northampton December 14, 2011: Valley Community Development Corporation (Valley CDC) is offering, 'Business for Vets' a free counseling service to help unemployed and underemployed veterans who want to start their own businesses in order to generate income for themselves and their families. Valley CDC's affiliates, **Franklin County Community Development Corporation in Greenfield (FCCDC)** and Hilltown Community Development Corporation in Chesterfield (HCDC), also are participating, enabling the three organizations to offer the free counseling service to veterans residing throughout the Pioneer Valley and portions of Berkshire County.

The free counseling provides veterans with help in deciding how to apply their education, experience and qualifications to launch their own business; what the process entails; what they will need; and how to pursue an action plan to get started. Counselors will help veterans develop business plans and financial projections that provide them decision-making tools and the strategies to help them succeed. Counselors also remain available for providing support after they launch their businesses to help them address the challenges facing all small business owners in today's economy.

According to Joanne Campbell, Executive Director of Valley CDC, "Veterans, due to the current economic climate, are facing difficult times finding good paying jobs for which they are qualified. Many have training, education and experience that can serve as the basis for establishing a successful business, but they lack the knowledge of how to proceed. Our Business for Vets program is designed to help veterans seize opportunities that they do not readily identify for themselves."

Gene Talsky, Director of Small Business Development added, "We are fortunate that funding from Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation for our collaborative Technical Assistance (TA) programs, enables the three CDC's to offer the Business for Vets program to a wider geographic territory than we would previously. We want to help our returning veterans successfully overcome some of the many challenges they face upon returning home. We hope to work closely with the local Veterans Administration and Soldier On to create opportunities for as many veterans as possible."

Veterans are invited to make direct inquiries to the nearest CDC, including:

**Franklin County CDC (Greenfield):**

**Amy Shapiro, 413 774-7204 Ext 107, [amys@fccdc.org](mailto:amys@fccdc.org)**

Hilltown CDC (Chesterfield):

Seth Isman 413 296-4536 Ext.12, [sethi@hilltowncdc.com](mailto:sethi@hilltowncdc.com)

Valley CDC (Northampton):

Gene R. Talsky, 413 586-5855 Ext. 23, [grt@valleycdc.com](mailto:grt@valleycdc.com)

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