

Memorandum of Understanding
Between
The United States Department of Veterans Affairs
And
Blacks In Government

I. PARTIES

The parties to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Blacks In Government (BIG).

II. BACKGROUND

The Department of Veterans Affairs mission is to fulfill President Lincoln's promise, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

BIG is a National non-profit organization advocating for African American people employed in the government sector; whether federal, state, tribal or municipal. BIG's mission is to promote the recruitment, retention, development and advancement of Black government employees and work to ensure their equal treatment under the law; to educate federal agencies in the history and obligations for African American employment and to assist them in its implementation of an identified plan; to assist government agencies in the development and delivery of initiatives and programs which honor African American employment across the nation; and to provide a national forum for issues and topics affecting Black government employees.

BIG also encourages Black youth to realize their potential and provide leadership in their community and schools, continue their education by obtaining a college degree relevant to one of the multitude of civil service professions and ultimately to seek a career in the government sector.

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of this MOU is to provide a framework for the parties named above as they pertain to VA and BIG. The agreement will foster a mutually supportive relationship and develop initiatives to enhance VA's ability to recruit and retain highly skilled African American men and women and prepare them to become future VA leaders; and increase the awareness and visibility of the VA BIG Chapter, throughout the nation and VA as an employee support group, professional development organization, community resource and networking mechanism.

IV. OBJECTIVE

- The objective of the MOU shall be to coordinate and facilitate activities that are responsive to the needs of VA and BIG. In this regard, VA and BIG shall meet on

a recurring basis to monitor the progression of recruitment, accessions, training, career development, promotion, and retention of qualified African Americans in VA's workforce.

Specific goals are to:

- Improve the outreach initiatives for African Americans in management and other senior level positions through substantive training: mentorship programs, technical career field internship programs, leadership development programs, and SES Candidate programs.
- Continue to promote education and leadership development opportunities through outreach to African Americans in VA.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

VA will:

- Advise Administrations, Staff Offices and other VA organizations of this MOU and issue Department-wide all-station memoranda encouraging employees to become involved in the African American (Black) Employment Program at VA.
- Per availability of resources, participate in BIG career fairs, recruitment activities, outreach efforts, National Training Institute, and/or conduct agency forums.
- Provide BIG with information on employment needs of VA to assist in targeting outreach to African American applicants and employees demonstrating the Office of Personnel Management's Leadership Competencies.
- Advertise vacancies and training events on BIG's official website and National Training Institute brochure to fulfill the required plan to combat areas of underrepresentation identified in the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Management Directive 715 (MD-715) and recruitment and training initiatives.
- Provide BIG with an inventory of career development programs for GS-12s and above. Cross promote MyCareer@VA, National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP), and Leadership VA (LVA).
- Collaborate with BIG in the development of a strategic plan for increasing outreach to African Americans at the GS 12-15 grade levels and Senior Executive Service (SES), through outreach and promoting professional career development. Cross promote SES Candidate Development Program (CDP),

MOU with VA and the African American Federal Executives Association (AAFEA) and the Asian American Government Executives Network (AAGEN) SES Fellowship and provide a USAJOBS VA vacancy link to be available on the BIG website.

- When agreed to by both parties, and when resources allow, purchase exhibit booth space at BIG's National Training Institute, to further VA's policies and program objectives for African Americans in VA.

BIG will:

- Inform BIG leadership and members of this MOU and encourage VA BIG members to become involved in the African American (Black) Employment Program at VA.
- Advertise VA vacancies and training events on BIG's official website to help fulfill the required plan to combat areas of underrepresentation identified in the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's MD-715 and recruitment and training initiatives.
- Market VA employment opportunities to BIG members via BIG's website; social media; and email blasts.
- Market VA career development programs for GS-12s and above to BIG members. Cross promote MyCareer@VA, NDIP, and LVA to BIG members.
- Collaborate with the VA in the development of a strategic plan for increasing outreach to African Americans at the GS 12-15 grade levels and SES, through outreach and promoting professional career development. Cross promote SES CDP, MOU with VA and AAFEA and AAGEN SES Fellowship and place a USAJOBS VA vacancy link on the BIG website.

VI. BENEFITS

The provisions of the MOU will be addressed as part of VA's Department-wide strategy to improve the outreach initiatives of African American men and women.

VII. PROGRAM FUNDING

Nothing herein shall be construed as obligating VA and BIG to expend funds on behalf of the purpose, objectives, and responsibilities set forth in this MOU except as stated herein or agreed to in writing by the signatories or the organizations they represent. All obligations of funds for expenditures by VA are subject to the availability of funds.

VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This MOU shall become effective on the date when the two parties sign. All terms are subject to Federal law and VA policy.

IX. AMENDMENTS

This MOU may be amended at any time by mutual written agreement of VA and BiG.

X. TERMINATION

This MOU will remain in effect for a period of 12 months or until terminated. This MOU may be terminated at any time by either party upon 60-day written notice to the other party.

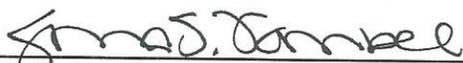
XI. AUTHORITY

This MOU is entered into pursuant to 5 CFR Part 251.

XII. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), decisions or disclosure of information to the public regarding projects and programs within this MOU will be made following consultations by the parties to the MOU.

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:



Gina S. Farrisee
Assistant Secretary for Human
Resources Administration

7/31/15

Date

Blacks In Government:



Darlene H. Young
National President
Blacks In Government

8/24/15

Date