

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

January 2023

Grit and Determination



Meet Nicole Lane, a former commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force. Nicole attended a Veterans Career Live session in December 2021, and began working with our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Danielle Hetu, shortly thereafter.

Nichole had planned to spend her entire career in the military; however, after she had a serious complication from surgery that led to a stroke and long-term disability, she medically retired in 2011. She worked very hard to regain as much of her physical health as possible. Post stroke, Nichole has struggled to find her fit although she had all of the skills and experiences that an employer would want. Given the severity of her long-term illness and recovery, she lacked the confidence to truly pursue her next career. This is not an uncommon experience, and is something our counselors work with their clients to overcome.

Nichole had it all from the beginning - she just needed a sounding board and was able to have that while working with Danielle.

In January 2023, Nicole accepted a job as Associate Director for Proposals & Compliance at Caladwich Consulting, LLC – a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) in Fairfax, VA. Getting the job and starting a career she wanted was 100% the result of Nichole's grit and determination.

Congratulations Nicole!

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

15 Client Placements

- 11 Paid Employment
- 4 Education/Training
 - 13 Veterans
 - 2 Active Duty
 - 3 PVA Members
- The average salary for the 8 clients placed in full-time employment was \$65,256; and the average income for the 3 clients placed in part-time work was \$14,466.



VCP Launches Disabled Veterans Self-Employment Pilot Program

WELLS FARGO

According to the National Disability Institute, 74% of people with disabilities do not participate in the labor force. For multiple reasons – including lack of accommodations and discrimination in

the workplace - individuals with disabilities continue to turn to self-employment/small business development as a viable alternative that provides greater control, choice and flexibility in terms of work schedule, environment and economic advancement.

While entrepreneurship is an important employment option for people with disabilities, they are often hindered by scarcity of supports, services, programs, and affordable start-up capital tailored to their unique needs and challenges. Thanks to a generous grant donation by the Wells Fargo Foundation, VCP will be launching a pilot program beginning in February 2023 to provide training, counseling and access to capital to veterans with spinal-cord injury or disease (SCI/D) who are considering self-employment. We received an overwhelming 72 applications for 15 "seats" in the inaugural (virtual) class; and we look forward to providing updates on this class and its amazing participants.