



Annual Report 2018

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November 5, 2018

To: The Governor of the State of Florida, Members of the Cabinet, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

It is my distinct honor and privilege to submit Veterans Florida's annual report for 2018. This marks the third full year of operations for our organization and I'm happy to report that we have made great progress in all of our major program areas.

Our nationwide, veteran-focused marketing campaign brought more than 266,000 unique and repeat visitors to our website and provided them with information on the benefits and opportunities available for veterans in Florida. This year's campaign saw continued growth in social media followers and email newsletter subscribers, as well as attracting over 1,000 job seekers to submit resumes.

In September, we launched a new version of the Veterans Florida Career Portal. This new tool will allow veterans to submit their resume, search and apply for jobs with companies that Veterans Florida has approved to receive Workforce Training Grant funds.

The Veterans Florida Workforce Training Grant program has seen steady growth and to date we have contracted with over 40 total businesses that have hired more than 350 veterans. These veterans collectively have earned over \$11,500,000 in salary that is going directly back into Florida's economy.

Since the inception of the Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program in early 2016, it has received more than 2,400 applications from veterans across the state, served 1117 veterans and had 121 businesses started by the veterans who have graduated from the program. These businesses have collectively earned almost \$22 million dollars in revenue, accessed over \$2.8 million in debt and equity financing, and hired 171 employees.

The Board of Directors and staff of Veterans Florida take pride in accomplishing this important mission in a transparent and cost-effective manner, always remembering that we have been entrusted with the taxpayer's dollars. I'm proud of what we have accomplished so far and very excited for the future of this program.

Sincerely,

James Sampey, Chairman

Board of Directors

Appointed by the Governor



James Sampey
Chairman

After serving 23 years at Cox Target Media, including roles as President of Valpak and Executive Vice President at Cox Target Media, Jim Sampey founded CIHU (Can I Help You?), LLC, in retirement, helping friends and business associates to take their businesses to the next level. Jim is engaged as Founder, Advisor and/or Investor to several organizations including Live Water Sports, Sky Data Ventures, Sterling Payment Technologies, Valpak, and Shinn and Company, savvycard.com, Prime Medical Apparel, and Performance Health Applied Technologies. He also serves on various Boards, including the Tampa Bay Partnership, University of Dayton, SunTrust Bank, Now Up Foundation, Vision Integrated Graphics and the Tampa Bay Defense Alliance.



Mark Harden

Mark Harden served in the U.S. Navy for thirty years and retired as a Chief of Naval Operations Directed Master Chief. He currently works as Director of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society in Pensacola, Florida. His passion is working on programs that support Veterans and Active Duty military personnel.

Mark is actively engaged in his community in a variety of ways. He is the current Area President Gulf Coast for the Navy League of the United States and is a National Director for that organization. He co-founded the Pensacola Veteran Support Organization Network (PVSON), which is a clearing house of more than 40 veteran support organizations that work together to solve local veteran/military needs. He is also a board member of the Northwest Florida My VA Community Veterans Engagement Board.

He is a graduate and an active member of the Leadership Pensacola Alumni Association where he previously chaired the leadership program for Pensacola, and has served as President of the Alumni Association and currently serves on the board.



Warren R. "Rocky" McPherson

Rocky McPherson is recently retired from serving for 10 years as the Vice President, Military and Defense programs, Enterprise Florida, Inc.—a public/private agency responsible for economic development initiatives in Florida. He had previously served five years as the Executive Director, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. He served on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) Veterans and families.

Rocky is a Vietnam veteran who served in combat, both as an Infantry Officer and as a carrier based Naval Aviator flying the A6E. During his Marine career he held key leadership roles as the Deputy Director, Marine Personnel Management Division; Chief of Staff, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and as a Group Commander, Marine Aviation Training Group, NAS Whidbey Island.

He is a 1966 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, and holds a Master of Political Science degree from Auburn University. He is also a graduate of the National War College in Washington, DC. Rocky and his wife Connie reside in Yulee, Florida.

Appointed by the Senate President



**Jim Bagby
Vice Chair**

Jim Bagby was appointed to the Board of Directors by former Senate President Don Gaetz. He served as Board Chairman from October 2014 through June 2017. Jim grew up near Tyler, Texas. He and his wife, Jennie, have two daughters: Sara, who lives and is studying for her MBA in London and Jennifer, who lives and works in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Jim has a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from West Point and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Western Kentucky University.

Jim's work experience includes 24 years in the U.S. Army with a variety of operational and staff assignments throughout the world. Prior to becoming the General Manager of One Seagrove Place he was the Executive Director of Visit South Walton and prior to that served as the Town Manager of Rosemary Beach.

Jim served two terms on the City of Destin City Council and currently serves on the Walton County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. He is a Lector and Eucharistic Minister at Resurrection Catholic Church. His hobbies include reading, golfing and riding his Harley.



Prebble Ramswell
Secretary

Dr. Prebble Q Ramswell spent six years working in Counterterrorism with the Central Intelligence Agency before moving to Florida. In 2014, Ramswell embraced a new challenge: running for Destin City Council. Her successful bid for Councilwoman led to appointments as Chair of the Growth Management and Economic Development Board with the Florida League of Cities, appointment as Mayor Pro Tem in 2016, and various appointments including Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization, Emerald Coast Fitness Foundation, and the Okaloosa County Economic Development Council Policy Board.

Dr. Ramswell has also served on the Board of Directors for organizations that include the Junior League of Northern Virginia, Junior League of the Emerald Coast, Montessori Learning Center of Fort Walton Beach, Gulf Swimming and the Children's Museum of Northern Virginia.

Dr. Ramswell earned BA's in Psychology, Sociology, and Political Science from the University of Houston, a Masters in Liberal Arts/Social Science from Texas Christian University, and a PhD in International Development/Political Science from the University of Southern Mississippi. She is the Academic Program Director for History, Philosophy and Political Science at Columbia Southern University and the author of *Euroscepticism and the Rising Threat from the Right and Left: the Concept of Millennial Fascism*.



Tom Rice
Treasurer

Tom Rice is the owner and chef of The Magnolia Grill of Fort Walton Beach, which he and his wife, Peggy, opened in 1996. In 2004, the Magnolia Grill received Florida's Good Neighbor Award from the National Restaurant Association and was the Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year. In July 2007, Congressman Jeff Miller recognized Tom and Peggy for humanitarian work in the Congressional Record of the 110th Congress.

Tom serves as Chairman of the Salvation Army Community Advisory Board of Okaloosa and Walton County, President of the Veterans Tribute Tower Committee, Board Member of the Northwest Florida State College Foundation and the Air Force Enlisted Village Development Committee. He is a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and DAV 72. Tom is a Veteran and retired as First Sgt. from the U.S. Army.

Appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives



John Adams

Brigadier General John Adams retired from the US Army in September 2007, culminating his service as Deputy U.S. Military Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As a Foreign Area Officer, Military Intelligence Officer and Army Aviator, his more than thirty years of active duty service in command and staff assignments included nearly eighteen years in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. He is the founder and President of Guardian Six LLC, a Florida-based Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business that assists clients in successfully analyzing national security issues and addressing U.S. and allied national security requirements. John holds a Master's in International Relations (Boston University), English (University of Massachusetts) and Strategic Studies (U.S. Army War College).



Martin Steele

Enlisted in the Marine Corps in January 1965. He rose from private to three-star general, culminating his military career as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Operations at Headquarters, US Marine Corps, in Washington, DC, in August of 1999. A decorated combat Veteran with 34-1/2 years of service, he is a recognized expert in the integration of all elements of national power (diplomatic, economic, informational and military) with strategic military war plans and has served as an executive strategic planner/policy director in multiple theaters across Asia. His extraordinary career was chronicled as one of three principles in the award-winning military biography *Boys of '67* by Charles Jones.

Upon retirement from active duty in 1999, he served as President and CEO of the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in New York City. Under his leadership, they adopted the mission of "Honor our heroes, educate the public, and inspire our youth about the price of freedom."

Currently, General Steele serves as the Associate Vice President for Veterans Research, the Executive Director of Military Partnerships and Co-Chair of the Veterans Reintegration Steering Committee at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. Additionally, General Steele is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Steele Partners, Inc., a strategic advisory and leadership consulting company.

General Steele is a graduate of the University of Arkansas where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in History ('74) and was recognized as a Distinguished Graduate of the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. He is a recipient of the 2013 Arkansas Alumni Award Citation of Distinguished Alumni, which recognizes exceptional professional and personal achievement and extraordinary distinction in a chosen field. He also holds three Masters Degrees from Central Michigan University, Salve Regina College and the Naval War College. General Steele serves proudly on several boards across the country that include the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation, Fisher House Foundation, Stability Institute, Call of Duty Endowment, Stay in Step Foundation, Operation Helping Hand, Veterans Advantage, University of Arkansas Veterans Resource and Information Center Board, and the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation.

Committees of the Board

Veterans Florida's Board of Directors created four committees to advise the Board on oversight and direction to the corporation.



Meet the Staff

Bobby Carbonell, Executive Director – Florida Air National Guard officer, Army combat veteran

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and works collaboratively with the Board to provide direction and leadership to the formulation and achievement of the organization's philosophy, mission, and its annual goals and objectives. Additionally, he works with the Board and staff to develop and implement policies, procedures, and long-range strategic plans, and oversees administrative, financial and program operations, and all personnel matters such as the design of staff organizational structure, hiring, performance evaluations.

Joe Marino, Career Services Director – United States Military Academy graduate, Army veteran

The Career Services Director is part of the executive team and responsible for all employment assistance efforts of Veterans Florida. This position is responsible for overall implementation and execution of the Workforce Training Grant program, recruiting efforts to match veterans with employment and outreach efforts to businesses throughout Florida. The Career Services Director implements and maintains technology solutions that support the Workforce Training Grant program and manages a team of veteran and employer outreach specialists.

Vacant, Entrepreneurship Director –

The Entrepreneurship Director is part of the executive team and responsible for coordinating, maintaining, and monitoring the organization's veteran entrepreneurship program, which includes multiple, geographically diverse Florida network partners delivering the curriculum to veterans. The Entrepreneurship Director manages the network partner contracts and maintains a statewide list of all veteran specific entrepreneurship resources.

Stephanie Massengale, Budget and Grants Director – Mother of US Navy Veteran

The Budget and Grant Director is part of the executive team and responsible for developing, maintaining, and monitoring the organization's budgets and budgetary process. The Budget and Grant Director operates and supervises the organization's primary grant program. Additionally, the Budget and Grant Director organizes Board Meetings and other events, and assists the executive team where necessary.

Andrea Hornsby, Office Manager – US Navy Veteran

The Office Manager provides duties as directed by the Executive Director to include calendars, meeting schedules, travel arrangements, processing expense reports, production of reports, arranging monthly meetings, teleconferences, webinars and taking minutes, prepares correspondence on behalf of the Executive Director, transcribes meeting minutes, and performs general administrative office support functions.

Allison Rudd, Entrepreneurship Program Coordinator – Military Supporter

The Entrepreneurship Program Coordinator is responsible for coordinating and administering the organization's veteran entrepreneurship program. The Entrepreneurship Program Coordinator assists the Entrepreneurship Director in managing the contracts with the network partners and prepares and maintains regular reports from the partners.

Christopher Meinhardt, Employer Outreach Specialist – US Marine Corps combat veteran

The Employer Outreach Specialist conducts outreach activities to encourage Florida employers to hire and train veterans through Veterans Florida Career Services, attends business functions, meets with employers, and initiates the application process for the Workforce Training Grant.

Fernando Mendez, Veteran Employment Specialist – US Navy veteran

The Veteran Employment Specialist provides individual assistance to veterans living in or desiring to move to Florida through Veterans Florida Career Services, sets appointments and works with veterans seeking employment through our case management system, and reports to the Career Services Director.

Programs and Services

Veterans Florida Career Services Program

To better serve the needs of veteran job seekers and employers, Veterans Florida maintains the Career Services Program. This program houses our largest grant program, the Veterans Florida Workforce Training Grant, which reimburses eligible companies for 50 percent of the training cost for every new veteran hired and trained, up to \$8,000 per employee.

The Career Services Program allows Veterans Florida to actively recruit qualified veterans to fill Workforce Training Grant funded positions at companies across the state. Veterans can upload their resume for consideration for any position or apply directly for open positions through the career portal on veteransflorida.org.

Veterans Florida has received more than 1,500 resumes from veterans seeking employment in Florida and is actively matching them with job openings at our training grant employers. Over 40 employers have used Veterans Florida Career Services.

Career Services Statistics as of June 30, 2018 (program began January 2016)

	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	Total
Veterans Hired	36	151	169	356
Veterans' Salaries after Training	\$1,460,606	\$6,022,582	\$4,162,210	\$11,645,398
Workforce Grant Reimbursements	\$159,025	\$632,230	\$451,917	\$1,243,173
Total Grant Reimbursements and Obligated (as of October 31, 2018)				\$1,465,613

Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program



Nearly one in four active duty service members and veterans want to open and operate their own business. Opportunity, freedom and challenge attract them to business ownership.

The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program offers veterans online and on-site instruction, facilitation, and mentorship designed to match up with their level of knowledge and their busy schedule.

The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program is conducted its third year of operation in Fiscal Year 2017-18. Since the inception of the program in early 2016, the program has received more than 2,400 applications from veterans across the state, served 1117 veterans and had 121 businesses started by the veterans who have graduated from the program. These businesses have collectively earned almost \$22 million dollars in revenue, accessed over \$2.8 million in debt and equity financing, and hired 171 employees.

The program features three pathways to meet the needs of veteran entrepreneurs at different stages of their entrepreneurial journey. Veterans can enter at any stage of the program (acceptance is required for the advanced class) and the pathways do not need to be done in any particular order or sequence.

The first pathway, Discover, comprises online lessons which familiarize veterans with basic terminology and concepts and acts as a gateway to the second and third pathways. Veterans Florida licensed an existing web-based system to give our participants a low-risk, low-commitment option to start learning the foundations of entrepreneurship.

The second pathway, Explore, offers topical workshops held on location at our six network partners. This pathway comprises a minimum of six, 2-3 hour workshops and is designed for veterans with early-stage ideas or early-stage companies.

The third pathway, Master, is an advanced program that delves more deeply into all aspects of entrepreneurship, and comprises 60 hours of on location facilitation held at one of our six network partners. This pathway is reserved for a maximum of 20 veterans with well-defined business ideas or early-stage companies at each network partner. Acceptance into this portion of the program is managed by the partners.

Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program Network Partners for 2017-18



Entrepreneurship Program Metrics

Fiscal Year	Applications Received	Participants Served	Program Graduates
FY15-16	612	424	167
FY16-17	458	300	147
FY17-18	787	393	82

Program Graduates Reported Data as of July 2018			
Revenue Generated	Capital Invested	Businesses	Hires
\$21,959,262	\$2,883,597	121	171

Veterans Agriculture Selection Program

Agriculture is one of Florida's largest economic sectors generating nearly \$120 billion in economic impact and supporting nearly 2 million jobs. The Veteran Agriculture Selection Program (VASP) is a nine-month internship pilot program to help veterans transition into sustainable careers in Florida's vibrant agriculture industry. The internship provides veterans a comprehensive learning experience that gives them the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be competitive for today's leading agriculture careers.

Veterans Florida applied for and won the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) VASP award in FY 2017-18 and will administer the program in 2018-19. Veterans Florida will market and recruit veteran interns to fill University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences positions located at Research and Education Centers located throughout the state. Selected interns will receive a monthly stipend for the duration of the internship. After completion of the VASP internship, Veterans Florida will assist participants with job placement and/or obtaining entrepreneurship resources in the agribusiness industry.

Marketing Campaign

Veterans Florida collaborates with VISIT Florida to operate a modern and comprehensive marketing campaign promoting three primary objectives: Job Placement, Entrepreneurship Training, and General Awareness of Florida as the best place to live and work for veterans and their families. Targeting is driven by qualitative research showing veterans are most likely to choose a permanent residence in the 12 months prior to and following military separation.



Vetcor Services is an company that works with Veterans...
492 views · November 7, 2017



Veterans Florida
4.3K views · September 28, 2017



Why are so many Veterans flocking to North Florida?
23K views · April 21, 2017



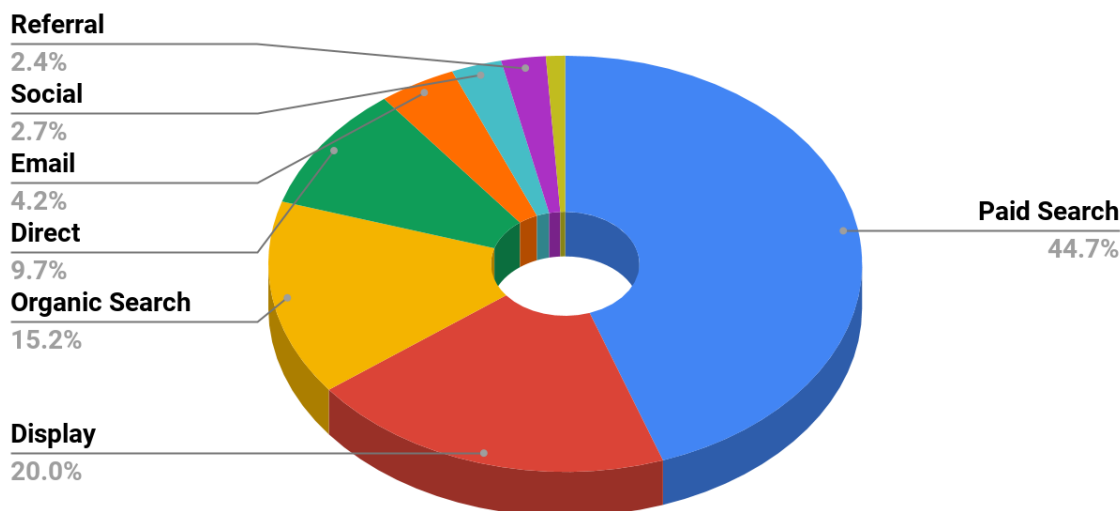
Veterans Florida Learn
950 views · April 20, 2016

For purposes of maximum impact, efficiency, detailed targeting, and performance tracking, the campaign uses digital advertising as the primary marketing channel. Traditional advertising is strategically used when opportunities arise to reach key audiences in a cost-effective manner.

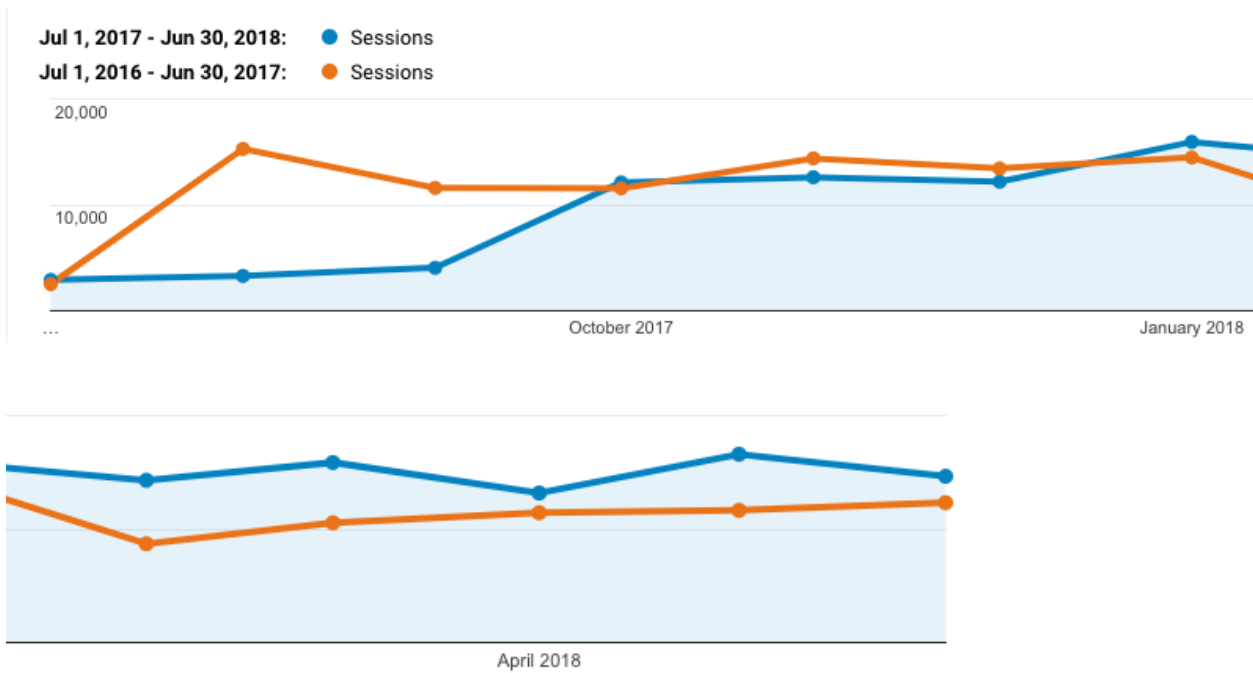
In addition to paid advertising, Veterans Florida maintains an active presence on all major social media platforms with regular content driving users to VeteransFlorida.org to gain more information and complete conversion actions such as submitting resumes, applying for the Entrepreneurship Training Program, and signing up to receive future email updates.

In keeping with marketing trends, Veterans Florida's efforts emphasize video content for social media and we have built a significant catalog of video assets aligned with organizational objectives. Videos include regional spotlights, education opportunities, and testimonials from veterans and businesses that have engaged in Veterans Florida programming.

FY 17-18 Web Traffic By Source



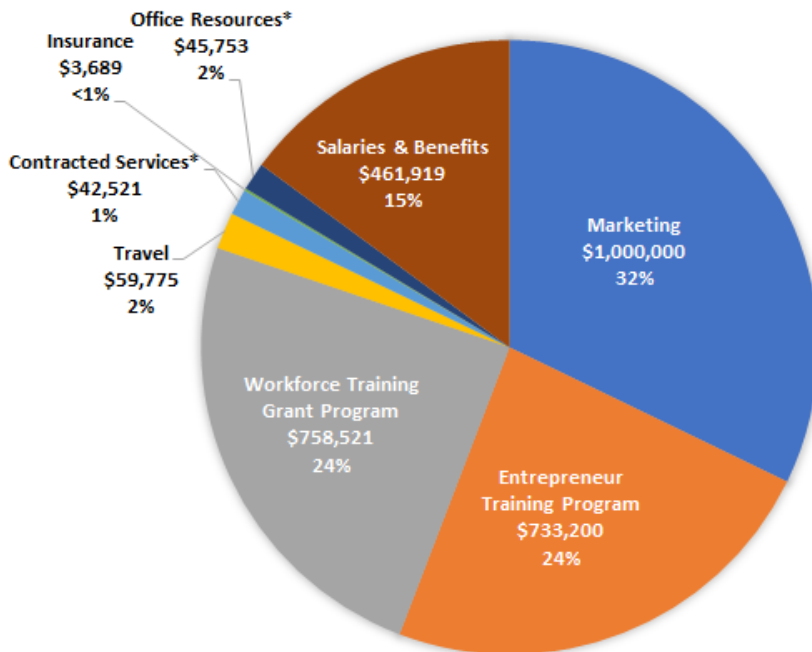
Year-Over-Year Comparison



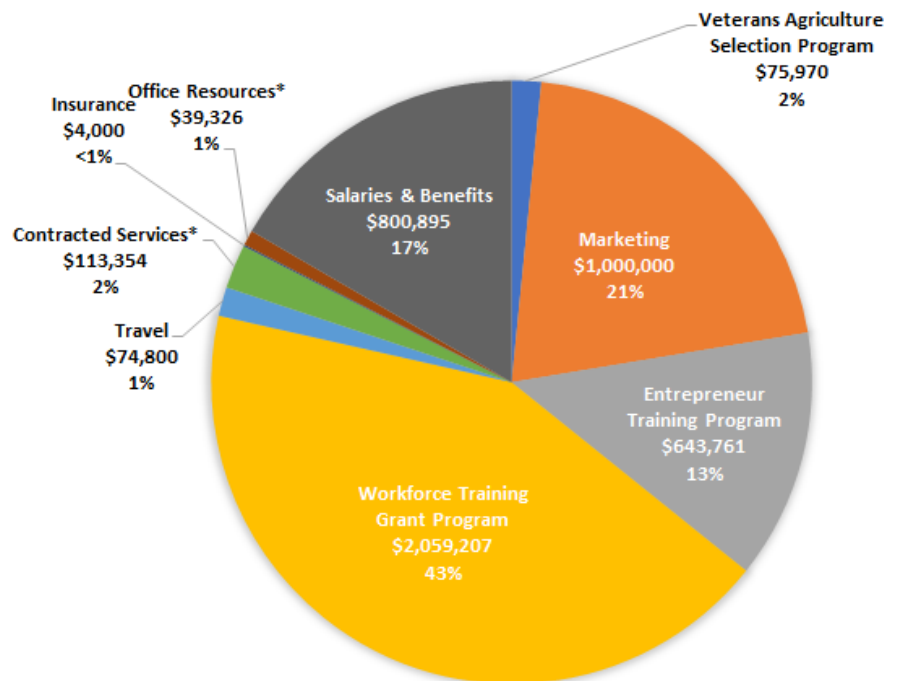
	16-17	17-18	% Change
Total Unique Website Visitors	108,574	107,961	-.56%
Total Facebook Page Likes	75,915	83,318	+9.8%
Email Newsletter Subscribers	13,479	17,325	+28.5%
LinkedIn Followers	682	1,275	+103%
Twitter Followers	298	368	+23.5%

Financial Summary

FY 2017-18 EXPENSES



FY 2018-19 BUDGET



*Office Resources include operational expenses such as office supplies and equipment, lease of office space, software, telecommunication services, printing, and postage. Contracted Services such as accounting, auditing services, HR/Payroll, legal services, and website development and management help support the organization's internal operations.

Contracts FY 2017-18

The corporation entered into the following contract to carry out its duties.

Date Contract Entered	Contractor	Service Provided	Amount	Date Contract Completed
6/16/2015	Carr, Riggs & Ingram	Auditing	\$10,500	9/30/2018
8/1/2017	Bullhorn	Customer Relations Management/Job Board	\$10,500	Ongoing Services
8/29/2017	Bunker Labs	E-learning Platform	\$10,000	1/1/2018
9/27/2017	Group Victory LLC	Strategic Planning Services	\$9,000	1/1/2018
10/1/2017	Study Hall Research	Job Seeker Research	\$70,000	11/30/2017
12/22/2017	Startup Tree	E-learning Platform	\$4,380	6/30/2018
5/31/2018	Monster	Resume Search on Existing Online Job Board	\$5,280	5/30/2019
6/28/2018	GSD	Salesforce Software Initialization	\$32,800	12/31/2018
6/28/2018	Salesforce.org	Contact Management Software for Entrepreneurship Program	\$7,170	7/1/2019