

Benedict College opens Veterans Workforce Development Center

Written by Staff Writer

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Columbia, SC - Benedict College will host a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the official opening of the Veterans Workforce Development Center (VWDC). The event will take place on Saturday, December 15, 2012 beginning at 10:30 a.m. at 2601 Read Street, Columbia, SC. Special Guest Speaker will be Lieutenant Colonel Timothy A. Warner, Military Deputy, United States Army Research Office, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Funded with a \$2,000,000 grant from the United States Department of Defense, the VWDC is a new breakthrough training ground to help returning veterans prepare for fulfilling careers after military service. "The veterans are such an important constituency that we wanted to make sure they had a place that they could come and make their it own. Everything was planned with them in mind, from the technology to the handicap accessibility of the classroom. This center will be a beacon of hope for veterans for many years as they enhance their education and employment prospects," explained Dr. Darlene Booth-Bell, Program Director.

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The grant proposes to assist the veterans' transition back into a highly competitive job market. VWDC's objective is to partner with regional colleges to support educational and professional development of veterans. The training focus is exclusively in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). VWDC offers academic scholarships, paid internships, career counseling, and workforce development training. The training provides additional support, such as preparing the veterans for entrepreneurial endeavors and teaching core business skills.

Dr. Booth-Bell said, "The past year has been a great experience getting to know veterans from around the state who are a part of the program. Men and women, who have served the country and now are advancing their education, make this such a worthwhile effort. It is an experience I will never forget."

For more information about the Veterans Workforce Development Program, contact Ms. Cathy Scarborough Franklin, Program Coordinator, Veterans Workforce Development Center at (803) 705-4781 or sfranklinca@benedict.edu.