

CASE STUDY: GUAM WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT



CHALLENGE

The United States unemployment rate currently stands at a near historic high of 9.3%, with the unemployment rate for veterans ages 20-24 even higher at 27%. At the same time, Guam will be experiencing unprecedented levels of military construction activity due to the relocation of a Marine regiment from Okinawa to Guam and other military build-up activities involving the Navy, Army, and Air Force. The Guam Military Build-Up is expected to generate \$23 billion in military construction projects and approximately 161,000 direct, indirect and inducted jobs – well beyond the capacity of Guam's limited labor force. Due to Guam's geographic proximity to Asia, most of these jobs are likely to be filled by foreign workers under the H-2(B) visa program. With domestic unemployment rates at historic highs and even higher unemployment rates among our nation's younger veterans, the labor shortage in Guam poses a powerful opportunity to provide badly-needed jobs to those who have bravely served our country. The problem is how to fill these jobs with unemployed veterans who need them.

SOLUTION

KAI is collaborating with the Guam Department of Labor and the University of Guam to develop and deploy an innovative outreach, training and employment pilot demonstration program for veterans in the Pacific. It will aggressively implement outreach and recruitment efforts focused on unemployed veterans in Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau. Unemployment and poverty rates in these islands are much worse than comparable national indicators and veterans from these islands are significantly underrepresented in government employment programs. The pilot program will hire veterans to lead efforts within each targeted recruitment area to identify, recruit, and provide on-going counseling and employment support services to other veterans and to help them to access disparate training programs. It will deploy software that will enable the government to easily monitor, track and report on key measures of program. Finally, the pilot program will provide professional expertise and employment information systems to the Guam Department of Labor to monitor employer hiring decisions to ensure that all qualified and available U.S. veterans are provided a fair opportunity to be hired and that employers effectively comply with veteran preference in all hiring decisions.

RESULTS

This pilot demonstration program provides potential domestic employment opportunities for over 161,000 unemployed veterans and helps to alleviate the severe labor shortage in Guam. It can also prevent up to \$4.6 billion in taxpayer dollars going overseas and retain these economic benefits in U.S.. It supports vigorous enforcement of U.S. immigration and labor laws mandating that American workers, especially veterans, be given hiring preference. It provides a high quality, reliable and trustworthy workforce to employers in Guam. Finally, it enables the strategic realignment of U.S. military forces in the Asia-Pacific region.