AT&T: Operation Hand Salute

Operation Hand Salute is a California Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise (DVBE) mentoring program. The purpose of this initiative is to mentor a select group of Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in improving their business operations and subsequently their ability to win corporate contracts. “Hand Salute” signifies AT&T’s longstanding commitment to developing DVBEs and acknowledging their military service.

Overview
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AT&T has implemented a year-long mentoring program that will expose small DVBEs to intensive workshops, seminars, and coaching sessions to help them elevate their competitiveness in the marketplace. Each mentee will be assigned two mentors – a current AT&T supplier – and an AT&T employee that is part of the Operation Hand Salute Task Force. During the 12-month program, mentees will receive quality coaching from their mentors, attend formal training courses, and engage in small business networking activities. At the end of the program, a mentee will have completed all courses and passed operational audits to enable them to earn TL9000 quality certification, the telecommunications industry equivalent to ISO 9000 certification.

The OHS program will focus on delivering awareness, advocacy, innovation, training, partnership, accountability, and recognition; ultimately creating a blueprint for DVBE organizations to use in the future to develop other members.
In addition to earning TL 9000 certification, mentees who complete the course will be provided opportunities to meet with AT&T leaders and be introduced to AT&T Prime Suppliers to explore potential business opportunities.

**Goals of the Program**
- Build on AT&T’s 2009 1.67% spending achievement with DVBEs in California; AT&T **exceeded** the CA DVBE spending goal and achieved more DVBE inclusion than any other CA utility
- Expand DVBE supply chain participation to under-utilized spend categories and include them in the growing areas of our business
- Provide DVBE mentees the tangible skills small businesses need to succeed
- Continue AT&T’s on-going commitment and partnership with key stakeholders dedicated to supplier diversity such as: the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and various DVBE advocacy organizations and policy makers
- Enhance AT&T’s brand awareness with DVBEs and all veterans

Long term Objective:
- Launch a national AT&T Operation Hand Salute Program in 2011
- Increase AT&T’s overall DVBE national results over next two years
  - Target: 1.5% percent

**Areas of Focus**
OHS Program will provide the following training seminars and opportunities:

**Awareness**
- Mentees will have a deep understanding of how to operate effectively within a global supply chain

**Advocacy**
- Increase the utilization of government and private sector resources and tools to become stronger advocates for their businesses. Mentees will gain an increased knowledge of DVBE Regulation.

**Innovation**
- Assist mentees in developing cutting edge solutions by incorporating sustainable technology strategies to compete and win corporate business
Training
  o TL9000 Quality Certification
  o SWOT Analysis
  o Access to Capital
  o Scholarship to attend formal executive education program at a leading university business school

Partnerships
  ● Increase new business opportunities through networking events, building relationships and mentoring sessions
    o Mentoring sessions with successful DVBE businesses and AT&T leaders
    o Access to key AT&T leaders and AT&T Prime suppliers

Accountability
  ● Mentees will be monitored and measured on their own success plan over the 12-month program

Recognition
  ● Operation Hand Salute businesses will be exposed to many stakeholders and policy makers both locally and nationally

OHS Executive Sponsor Team
  ● Tim Harden, President, AT&T Supply Chain & Fleet Operations
  ● Ken McNeely, President, AT&T California
  ● Marianne Strobel, Executive Director, AT&T Global Supplier Diversity
  ● John K. Lopez, Chairman, Association for Service Disabled Veterans