



## Bloomberg Announces Vets Entrepreneurship Program

BY GABRIELLE KAROL



With the unemployment rate for today's veterans hovering around 10%, many former servicemen and women are eyeing entrepreneurship.

On Monday, New York City's Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced a new program aimed at helping veterans along that path. The Veterans Entrepreneurship Program, run by the city's Small Business Services and the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at

Syracuse University, plans to help 25 veterans kickstart their entrepreneurial dreams with a free, four-week program aimed at giving them the tools necessary to launch small businesses.

“We can never repay our veterans the debt we owe them, but we can do everything possible to support those who have served by improving services that can help their transition to civilian life. Veterans have just the kind of leadership, discipline and work ethic you need to launch a successful business and create jobs and we're determined to help more veterans succeed,” said Mayor Bloomberg in a statement announcing the initiative.

The first phase is a two-day program designed by the Institute for Veterans and Military Families. The Institute's managing director, James Schmeling, says the program helps veterans conquer the many challenges they face in transitioning to civilian life and embarking on the path of small business ownership.

The remainder of the four weeks will be powered by the Kauffman Institute for Entrepreneurship's FastTrac program. This program is designed to help veterans build out their business plans

and marketing strategies, as well as figure out financing for their new ventures.

“Veterans have a higher level of resiliency and a higher level of persistence towards a goal,” says Schmeling, in addition to the flexibility necessary to adapt to changing circumstances. He says these traits make veterans highly successful small business owners.

Veterans can apply for the program online starting on Monday, November 18. After filling out the online application, veterans will be contacted for interviews, after which 25 participants will be selected for the program.