

NVTI Podcast Series

The Defense Industrial Base

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Narrator

Welcome to the National Veterans' Training Institute podcast series, where we discuss pressing issues affecting today's veterans.

Rebecca

Welcome to today's NVTI podcast on the defense industrial base. My name is Rebecca, and I'll be your host. Here with us today are representatives from the Department of War to discuss the defense industrial base. Let's start with some introductions.

Dr. Kristin Schaaf

Good afternoon. Pleasure joining you today. I'm Kristin Schaaf. I serve as the Director of Investment Programs within our Warfighting Investments, Resourcing, and Execution, or WIRE, Directorate. This manages our Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment, or IBAS program, as well as the Defense Production Act, or DPA, Title III program. This is all under the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War for Industrial Base Policy.

Kris Rick

All right. And hello, everyone. My name is Kristopher Rick. I work for Dr. Schaaf, and I serve as the workforce sector program manager for WIRE and really align across the various sectors that we'll talk about for the defense industrial base as workforce really underpins the entirety of our efforts in the defense industrial base. Currently, in this capacity, I manage with a great team over 70 active workforce development projects, valued at just over about \$390 million, ranging from Norfolk to Hawaii, Great Lakes to the Gulf Coast, and pretty much everywhere in between. And really look forward to getting into the topic today and discussing those opportunities. So we'll hand it back over.

Rebecca

Thank you both so much. So let's start off with the most important question. What is the defense industrial base, and why is workforce development important? What misconceptions are there that people may have about the defense industrial base (or DIB) and its needs?

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Dr. Kristin Schaaf

Great question and one that we get often. So the defense industrial base, or DIB as we like to refer to it, is really that worldwide industrial complex. This enables the research, development, design, production, delivery, and maintenance of military weapons systems, subsystems, components, and the associated parts, all to meet the US military requirement. So a little bit of a breakdown in terms of what constitutes the DIB. It does include government-owned manufacturing facilities and more than 100,000 private-sector defense companies and their subcontractors. So it's really important to note that this ranges from the very well-known large prime defense contractors to those small family-owned businesses on down to the machine shops. The DIB provides the critical products and services to equip and sustain our military. This is with their advanced weaponry, maybe vehicles, secure software, microelectronics, aerospace components, and logistics services. As one of the designated critical infrastructure sectors, the DIB is absolutely vital to national security. The DIB is really viewed as that essential bridge between commercial industrial capability and national defense. It ensures that our US forces have the technology, equipment, and that logistical support that's needed to maintain vital military readiness. Within our Warfighting Investments, Resourcing, and Execution Directorate, we work to revitalize the DIB by focusing on eight critical sectors. So really succinctly, we define these as strategic and critical materials, energy storage and batteries, our kinetic capabilities, microelectronics, manufacturing writ large, workforce, critical chemicals, as well as sea, land, air, space, and unmanned systems. In terms of some of the misconceptions about the DIB, there's a range of them, so I'll provide, I think, probably the top three that we routinely get. The first understandably being that the DIB only consists of large aerospace and defense giants. Again, people understandably often think that the DIB is made up entirely of massive household prime contractors. And while that—they are included, the likes of Lockheed Martin, RTX, Northrop Grumman, Boeing Defense, and General Dynamics. These are the ones that build our fighter jets, submarines, and missiles. The reality is quite different, that it's not exclusive to them. The DIB really does include more than 100,000 companies. And the Department of War is legally mandated to award at least 23% of prime contracts to those small businesses. Another understandable myth is that the department only buys weapons and aeroplanes. Again, the really big-ticket items. Some people believe that if a company doesn't manufacture munitions or tactical vehicles, that it's probably not part of the DIB. But again, the reality is really quite different. Non-combat items actually represent 50% of our defense procurement every single year. Understandably, the military regularly buys things like the necessary medical equipment. Of course, their uniforms, basics like office supplies, computers, and associated software. And

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then I think the other biggest myth that we hear routinely is that DIB jobs are dull, dark, dirty, dangerous, and unreliable. And the reality is that many manufacturing jobs in the DIB are in ultra-high-demand now, and they're in modern facilities that are using absolute state-of-the-art equipment and processes. As we take a look back, really over the last 30 years, the defense industrial base has undergone this massive structural transformation. Decisions were made back in the early 1990s, and these were driven by a desire to really capture that post-Cold-War peace dividend. And that, combined with broader corporate financial trends, really reshaped how the US military bought technology. And ultimately, it led to a fragile and unresponsive supply chain. Now, the post-Cold-War consolidation led to an unprecedented wave of mergers and acquisitions. For example, the number of tactical missile, aircraft, and major military prime contractors went from more than 50 down to just five. As defense budgets shrank, DIB production lines capable of scaling that quickly shifted towards building highly complex, expensive, exquisite, and customized systems in very low quantities. Ultimately, this led to the DIB losing its surge capacity and the ability to rapidly ramp up manufacturing of munitions and equipment during a sudden conflict. And finally, mirroring the broader corporate world in the late 1990s and into the 2000s, our defense primes optimized their supply chains for efficiency and for low cost rather than for speed and redundancy. And ultimately, this meant offshoring the sub-tier component manufacturing and relying on just-in-time logistics. Now the result of that is a highly fragile subcontractor ecosystem that emerged. And today, we're seeing many of our critical weapons systems rely on a single-source supplier for their subcomponents, whether it be microelectronics, solid rocket motors, or even specialized chemicals. And this has ultimately left the DIB highly vulnerable to geopolitical supply chain disruptions. So with that background, Kris, I'll turn it over to you to discuss the implications regarding the workforce sector.

Kris Rick

Yeah, thanks, Dr. Schaaf. And what was just laid out there, all of it really has driven the decrease in the technician, skilled trade, and engineering capabilities and occupations that were highly prevalent within the defense industrial base for many decades, and with offshoring, with reduction in primes and the like, has really decreased over the last several decades. Those that have the skills and technical expertise within various sectors of the defense industrial base and as a result that now in this huge, huge surge in demand for these skill sets as we are investing heavily across Department of War and other federal agencies to rebuild critical supply chain and rebuild defense industrial base manufacturing capability and capacity in the country.

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You know, this really maybe has led to some misconceptions on that front as well, that all we need are extremely skilled, highly degreed individuals, which we do. We have several investments that really focus in on our engineers and bringing that talent into the defense industrial base to provide expertise for things like hypersonics and munitions and shipbuilding. But what it's really pointed out is this structural lack of training and education pipelines within the country that build skilled trades and technicians across various fields. And that, as we see, has really been the largest gap across the defense industrial base workforce that we're investing to solve for. So with that, I think we'll turn it back over to the host.

Rebecca

Thank you. So can you share some of the challenges the DIB faces today?

Dr. Kristin Schaaf

Absolutely. Well, we're really fortunate that the US defense budget has reached record highs. The defense industrial base is facing really some systemic vulnerabilities that are limiting its ability to respond to modern high-intensity conflicts. Today's challenges are characterized not by a lack of funding, but really more so by a lack of production scale, physical capacity, and very importantly, workforce availability. For instance, we have zero surge capacity. This can definitely be attributed as also our munitions bottleneck. Again, for 30 years, the Department and contractors optimized for peacetime efficiency rather than prioritizing wartime resilience. They divested of that excess production capacity, at the time understandably, to save money. As a result, recent global conflicts that we've seen in Ukraine, Israel, and now Iran, they've depleted US stockpiles of critical munitions. And because the Department does not traditionally pay companies to maintain quote unquote idle capacity, replenishing the stockpiles will take years, as complex production lines, they can't simply be turned on instantly. Now in addition to that, there's extreme sub-tier vulnerability, and as we mentioned before, single points of failure. There's extreme market consolidation that's created these single-source and sole-source dependencies throughout the lower tiers of our supply chain. If a single specialized subcontractor goes bankrupt or faces a cyber-attack or suffers a facility fire, it can really cripple an entire program. And key materials such as raw energetics, our solid rocket motors, specialized castings and forgings, and microelectronics, they really do frequently depend on a single factory, or worse, on foreign adversaries for raw processing. Additionally, and as I think most people will relate to, there is bureaucratic unpredictability. Understandably, most companies are hesitant to make these major capital investments in new factories or machinery

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without that guaranteed multi-year demand signal from the government. But because Congress typically funds the military on a volatile year-to-year basis, however, contractors really aren't in a position where they can predict what the long-term demand looks like. So if a contractor is going to spend \$100 million of its own capital to build a new munitions factory, they may risk bankruptcy if the Department abruptly cancels or scales back or shifts the program that following fiscal year. Now, on top of that, there's complex and slow-moving contracting processes that often could deter companies from even entering the defense sector. And understandably, this all impacts workforce as well. Kris, I'll turn it over to you for more on that.

Kris Rick

Yeah, thanks. And on the workforce front with that, in response of the historic investments and, really, efforts on behalf of the Department to rebuild the defense industrial base, we see challenges with workforce really being laid out in at least a 2.5 million primarily skilled-trades and technician workforce gap through 2032. It's likely to be higher than that as the defense industrial base is really laid out across at least six, maybe seven of the 16 industry clusters that are prevalent across the country. The largest portion is aligned with manufacturing, and we're keenly aware of the requirements for the skilled trades and engineering workforce in the manufacturing space. But it also touches mining, mining-adjacent industry for critical mineral extraction and processing. It also touches transportation and warehousing for a critical supply chain, movement of parts and resources between the various employers to the primes for assembly, information, and the like. So as we look at the challenges for workforce associated with this going forward, it really has been impacted by a kind of historic shortage of STEM degree fields, both at our education institutions, and then technical skilled trades, career technical education, and trade schools across the country producing really the refined talent that we need in high-end welding, CNC machining, metrology, casting, non-destructive testing, additive manufacturing, as all of these are critical to all of the sectors within the defense industrial base. And given the multibillion-dollar contracts that really the defense industrial base is seeing in this reemergence of investment, the demand for talent has never been greater. So I'll turn it back over to the host.

Rebecca

Thank you both for sharing some of those challenges. What are the main gaps that the DIB aligns with and what makes veterans and transitioning service members such good fits for the DIB? How can veteran service providers utilize the DIB to benefit the veterans that they serve?

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Dr. Kristin Schaaf

I'll address that second part of your question first and then I'll turn it over to Kris to really dive into the gaps that we address within the workforce-sector value chain and the way that we define it. Within the DIB, we're facing severe skilled-labor shortages and supply chain bottlenecks. And veterans and our transitioning service members really represent one of the most valuable talent pools that are available to our defense contractors. They're really a natural and highly strategic fit for the DIB workforce, and we believe so for several key reasons. Number one, they have active security clearances, and that matters critically. The vast majority of military personnel hold active secret or top secret security clearances. And this is really important because obtaining a new security clearance can take several months to over a year, and understandably it costs defense contractors thousands of dollars in administrative and lost time expenses. Now, hiring our veterans with active transferable clearances, that allows our contractors to onboard personnel and place them on classified or sensitive defense programs virtually immediately. Now, second, the built-in mission-first culture of our veterans is valuable to many companies. Of course, this extends even far outside of the defense industrial base. Now, unlike typical commercial industries, the DIB is directly linked to warfighter survival and national security. And our veterans deeply understand the why behind the strict cybersecurity standards like CMMC and military specifications, or mil specs as they're known, that are required by the department. This shared mission-oriented mindset, it usually leads to high integrity work and much lower turnover rates. Additionally, they have highly portable technical and trade skills that are needed across the DIB. As many of you know, the military trains personnel in a massive array of technical and industrial disciplines. This is certainly inclusive of advanced welding, aviation maintenance, submarine operations, logistics, electronics, as well as cyber defense. And understandably, our defense industrial base needs all of those skills. Now the DIB's currently suffering from a massive deficit in skilled-trade workers and many transitioning service members already possess these highly specialized, hands-on mechanical and technical skills. Now, lastly, many of our veterans, they've spent years maintaining, repairing, operating, and relying upon the exact weapons systems, vehicles, software, and equipment manufactured by our DIB companies. So ultimately, when a veteran transitions to a defense contractor, they can bring with them invaluable user feedback and directly share that in terms of the design and engineering teams. They also know how the equipment performs in those austere, harsh field environments. They know from firsthand experience what breaks most often and how user interfaces can be optimized for those incredibly high-stress combat scenarios. And that kind of experience is absolutely irreplaceable. Really, for the DIB, hiring

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veterans, it's not just the corporate responsibility initiative, it is a strategic national security multiplier. Our veterans possess the exact combination of technical aptitude, active security clearances, and again, that mission-first discipline that's required to rapidly scale defense production and overcome the current workforce bottlenecks that we are dealing with. Kris, I'll turn it over to you to elaborate on the workforce-sector gaps in our value chain.

Kris Rick

Yep, thanks very much. And as a 30-year Army veteran, I can definitely attest to the experiences of taking brand-new pieces of equipment and instantly breaking them in a field environment, providing that feedback to the RDT&E teams that come out to survey it. So definitely value-add having that capability on the team from the get-go. So let me dive into the workforce-sector gaps here. So the workforce sector underpins the entirety of our investment sectors across the board. We really focus on four gaps or lines of effort as you might address them. The first is recruitment and awareness. It is really finding the next generation of defense industrial base workforce and exposing them to the various careers within the defense industrial base, gaining some technical aptitude and really getting them excited about joining the defense industrial base and moving into these great careers going forward. That primarily consists of heavy investment that we make in K-12 programs, really bringing back to our primarily middle-school and high-school technical and skilled trades exposure and training that has not been consistent across especially the high school system for many decades in the country. It also includes large investment with our various performers in identifying pathways for transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses to come into the defense industrial base. And then also those that are re-entering the workforce. So that's really kind of that recruitment and awareness gap that we solve for. The second is training, both capacity and capability. So primarily we discuss many of the roles that we aim to fill are skilled trades and technician roles and really across the country at this point we're at about a two-to-one ratio, meaning there are two job openings in skilled trades and technician roles in the various occupations for one training seat in either career technical education or technical schools or accelerated training programs. So we aim to close that gap by increasing the capacity of the existing career technical education and trade schools, and where appropriate, adding capability and bringing in updated techniques in manufacturing and the like, be it of additive manufacturing or current industry-informed welding curriculum that really meets the mil spec standard coming onto the job initially. So that's really that second gap, which is training capacity and capability. The third is hiring and retention into the defense industrial base, right? So once we develop that pipeline

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through recruitment and awareness and get them into the training programs to bring them into the defense industrial base, we want to hire them, and most importantly, we want to retain them. So we have a growing number of investments with various performers to help primarily the mids and smalls. I mean the primes, have it figured out pretty well. They have very robust hiring talent acquisition pathways into their various roles. But those mids and smalls across the country that are part of that 100,000 that are critical to the supply chains for many of our major end items, those are the ones that need the most help with identifying valid talent pipeline pathways and finding and recruiting those individuals, bringing them through the training programs, and then hiring them into their businesses to support the defense industrial base. And then once they're there, retaining them as we definitely want to see that talent stay within the defense industrial base and not lose it to adjacent industry. The last gap that we solve for is workforce data analytics specific to the defense industrial base. As I previously mentioned, the DIB crosscuts at least six of the 16 major industry clusters that both Census and Labor look at and provide workforce analytics on. But unfortunately, those tools do not specifically call out defense industrial base-aligned efforts within those industry clusters. And many, many of the defense industrial base employers are dual-use, meaning they provide goods and services not only for the defense industrial base, but for broader commercial markets, and understanding the workforce data analytics associated with those employers is extremely important for us as we look at investments to close the skills gap and hiring gaps for those critical supply-chain employers across the country. How veteran service organizations can utilize the DIB to benefit veterans they serve. VSOs and MSOs are in a very unique position in that they provide exceptional services to support the transition of service members off active duty back into the civilian workforce and their spouses to include aligning them with training and employment opportunities. So I think really the first thing is for those VSOs and MSOs to become highly familiar with the transition programs that are available and the current updates to those programs that happen almost continually, led by the US Department of Labor Veteran Employment Training Services and the Department of War Military Civilian Transition Office. And really those two big ones in that bucket include the Employment Navigator and Partnership Program under DOL Vets. We have several of our performer partners that are also MOU'd providers under the ENPP program. That includes SENEDIA for the New England Shipbuilding and Submarine Building initiatives, the Hampton Roads Workforce Council down in Newport News and Norfolk, Virginia Beach area, and several others that really aim to provide pathways for those separating service members that receive employment services and their spouses by the employment navigators on installations across the world, basically, into the defense

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industrial base. So really becoming familiar with that program and the expansion that is happening with it. And then the second, I think, is the DO—Department of War SkillBridge program. There have been some recent initiatives this year under the SkillBridge program to more aggressively align it with opportunities in the defense industrial base. This has resulted in some Secretary of War guidance to the services to ensure that maximum offering is provided to those entering into defense industrial base roles through SkillBridge and really a concerted effort to try to bring more providers, more employers into the SkillBridge umbrella to really build out those pathways into the defense industrial base. And that really also includes mids and smalls as well.

Rebecca

So how can veterans and service members translate their military skills?

Dr. Kristin Schaaf

Well, another great and relatively new opportunity is SkillBridge. And so SkillBridge allows our transitioning service members to spend their final 90 to 100 days, depending upon your respective service, spend that time of active duty completing our civilian internships and doing on-the-job training with our approved defense contractors. So during a SkillBridge internship, the department continues to pay the service member's military salary and benefits. So this allows our DIB companies and other organizations to actually evaluate and train our exceptional military talent in those specialized roles. Those could very well be that CMMC compliance auditing or defense manufacturing, and ultimately, it's at virtually no cost and no risk before making that permanent job offer. Kris, I'll turn over to you to elaborate a little further on the SkillBridge.

Kris Rick

Yeah, thank you. In addition to that, I would also say that identifying, in their transition, their individual knowledge, education, and credentials that they can obtain in service that can feed into that SkillBridge pathway is also of high value to the transitioning service member and really sets them up well as they move into the various SkillBridge opportunities. We do have a new initiative that is on board that I'll hand over to Dr. Schaaf to talk about, but there is a SkillBridge search function that is aligned with that initiative that will allow another opportunity to bring transitioning service members into those SkillBridge opportunities aligned with the defense industrial base.

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Rebecca

Thank you both for that important information. So can you share and talk a little bit about how veterans can find these opportunities? I hear you have a new website to help people access this information. Is that correct?

Dr. Kristin Schaaf

Absolutely. So just a short while ago, back on July 2nd, the department launched Build Freedom. Build Freedom is our national workforce development and awareness campaign. So the website, buildfreedom.us, this will eventually become that one-stop shop for all DIB jobs, whether it be for veterans, spouses, or anyone else. Kris, I'll turn it over to you to share some more exciting information regarding Build Freedom.

Kris Rick

Yes, we are very excited about buildfreedom.us as it is off the ground now and off to a running start. So in the design of buildfreedom.us and the job board functionality that we chose to embed in it, we partnered with the National Labor Exchange, the nation's job board that is a partnership between the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, and the NLx to provide the syndicated job feed to the workforce system across all states and territories on a daily basis. Because there are functions that are already built into the NLx that primarily support veterans for their job search and transitioning service members. It does have a SkillBridge search function in it for job postings that are aligned with the SkillBridge program and a robust military spouse employment functional capability in there that aligns those jobs for military spouses. So we brought the NLx on board in a partnership to support the buildfreedom.us job board and provide an increased expansion through the development of a defense industrial base microsite within the NLx that will bring not only the existing jobs, which, any given day, there's roughly 35 to 40,000 defense industrial base-related jobs in the NLx and all the primes already have their jobs posted there, but really again offer that opportunity for the mids and smalls, some of which may not even have a website to post their jobs on, to use the National Labor Exchange as their job board so that not only feeds buildfreedom.us, but also because it is the nation's job board and syndicated daily to the entirety of the workforce system, by extension puts those jobs in front of the roughly 2,300 American job centers and those that are providing employment services to veterans, military spouses, transition service members, and all Americans that utilize the workforce system. That is of great importance to us as we view this as an opportunity to—really, rising tide lifts all boats and help not only directly

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support buildfreedom.us, but by virtue of the expansion of defense industrial base opportunity across the entire workforce ecosystem.

Rebecca

You shared that the website is partnered with the National Labor Exchange. Who else have you partnered with in developing this? And how can employers use the NLx if they're looking for employees?

Dr. Kristin Schaaf

We're very excited to share that we have partnered with Mike Rowe and the mikeroweWORKS Foundation. As many of you all know, for nearly two decades, Mike Rowe has served as the nation's trusted source regarding the skilled trades. He has been tirelessly advocating for the criticality of these skilled trades. But far beyond advocating, he's also established the mikeroweWORKS Foundation, and they're actively reinvigorating the skilled trades in America by helping the next generation get the training they need for these in-demand jobs that are absolutely critical to national security. As we mentioned, back on July 2nd, the IBAS program at the Department of War awarded the mikeroweWORKS Foundation \$10 million for work ethic scholarships, for people interested in learning a skilled trade. That \$10 million will translate into over 1,100 scholarships, and we anticipate, and in fact we're already seeing, this down payment galvanize a wealth of additional patriotic capital for the skilled trades. Kris, I'll turn it over to you for additional insights.

Kris Rick

Yep, thank you. So really that partnership is very much helping the buildfreedom.us initiative and reinvigorating and expanding the awareness for the entirety of the country for these opportunities in the defense industrial base skilled trades. Through the partnership efforts with the mikeroweWORKS Foundation Scholarship and the performers that our current workforce portfolio funds to provide training, to provide impactful awareness at the middle school and high school level, we are expanding the capability of the buildfreedom.us platform to list those partner organizations that are likely in the local communities around you and how you can engage with those partners and find training opportunities and then use the National Labor Exchange and the job postings for the defense industrial base to move directly into open positions across many of the technician and skilled trade roles that are currently open within the defense industrial base. We think this is extremely important and are looking at bringing in

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additional capabilities similar to the CareerOneStop and O*NET training and certification finder tool that currently resides on the Department of Labor websites and the state workforce system websites. So that, based on the ZIP code of the location that you reside in, you'll be able to quickly find valid training programs in your community and in your surrounding region/area to engage with to gain the critical skill sets and use the scholarship funds that are currently available to move through those training programs for careers in the defense industrial base.

Rebecca

What an exciting partnership and opportunity! So what is the future of the DIB, and what do you see as the long-term impact of what you're doing on the DIB?

Dr. Kristin Schaaf

Well, very succinctly, this is a team effort. It's truly an all-hands-on-deck effort, meaning the Department of War, industry, academia, state and local governments, as well as the American people. But it also very importantly means long-term funding and long-term focus. As we discussed earlier in the conversation, it took 30 years to get into this industrial predicament. So understandably, it will take some time to fix it. But with that said, we are making an impact across the sectors because everyone in government leadership supports this industrial revival. This administration, both parties in Congress, every department, of course, very much including our Department of War. You know, to date, we've already had massive impacts as we look out across some of our critical sectors in which we make investments. Last year in particular, in the realm of microelectronics, a company, Denka America, was headed towards bankruptcy, and they make copper foil, which may sound like a very niche material until you learn that it is very much pervasive in terms of its need in microelectronics. We were able, through our program, to not only prevent bankruptcy, but Denka America has now become Camden Copper. It is a domestic source for our copper foil, actually the only source in North America. So we have removed adversarial supply chain reliance there, created domestic manufacturing jobs, and really done a wealth to reinvigorate that industry down in Camden. Another great example is a partnership in our investments out at Honolulu Community College. Right, in terms of being able to go into the skilled trades, we have to have programs and those training opportunities. We were very excited last November to host the first cohort graduating from Honolulu Community College machinist training. Now we're so thrilled because this is the first machinist course on island in over 50 years. The last one hadn't happened since the 1970s. So as you could imagine, a really critical component towards building out the talent pipeline so that we

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can re-shore these domestic capabilities. With that, I'll turn it to Kris for some additional highlights regarding workforce.

Kris Rick

Yeah, I would add to that the future of the defense industrial base workforce is bright. I mean, we've seen great, great cross collaboration with our Department of Labor, Department of Education, Department of Commerce partners at the national level with the services and the critical efforts that they have not only from Navy's maritime and submarine industrial base, but across all of the services for things like UAS, counter-UAS, munitions, the like, and as we move forward, the Build Freedom campaign is really designed to provide that overarching construct to bring the entirety of the workforce portfolio behind it, but also offer the opportunity for other organizations to kind of draft off of each other as we move through really reinvigorating the entire nation's not only defense, but broader manufacturing workforce, and being able to do that in concert with each other. Where that actually happens is at the local level. And that is the direct impact that we seek to make with many of our performers. We have them in New England, with SENEDIA graduating over its 10,000th trainee moving into the General Dynamics Electric Boat and supply chain there for critical submarine instruction, ATDM in Danville that has graduates from across 47 states going into over 800 defense employers and really closing those workforce gaps at a local level to chip away at that broad workforce requirement for the defense industrial base as we move forward. But we can't do it alone, and we certainly need the support of the VSOs and MSOs and those that provide services to veterans and transitioning service members and military spouses to help align their skills and attributes into defense industrial base employment going forward.

Rebecca

Well, thank you both so much for sharing this important information with us today. For our listeners, if you'd like more information on serving veterans, please visit nvti.org to access resources such as this podcast. We're constantly adding new material, so please check back often. We also, of course, invite you to continue the conversation at the Making Careers Happen for Veterans: Community of Practice. Thank you all so much.

Narrator

This podcast is brought to you by the National Veterans' Training Institute, whose mission is to further develop and enhance the professional skills of veterans' employment and training

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