



# MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
Commissioner Click Bishop

May 11, 2007

No. 07-43

## For Immediate Release

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### **Helmets to Hardhats program helps returning veterans with apprenticeships**

JUNEAU – The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development is announcing renewed emphasis on the national “Helmets to Hardhats” program. This federally authorized program assists transitioning service members, National Guard and Reserves and veterans in entering careers in the growing construction industry.

Alaska Works Partnership, a nonprofit apprenticeship outreach and training consortium of Alaska’s building trade unions and their apprenticeship programs, has partnered with the national H2H program to provide services to Alaska’s veterans and service members.

“It was a logical addition to our efforts, which included special outreach programs to rural Alaska, Alaska Natives, minorities and women,” said Mike Andrews, Alaska Works’ executive director. “Through our partnership with the department, and through the priority given veterans under federal job training programs, we’ve been able to provide a lot of assistance to veterans entering the trades in the past two years.”

Given the large deployments of Alaska National Guard soldiers from throughout Alaska, Andrews and Tom Nelson, director of the department’s Employment Security Division, have identified Guard members as a priority for future Helmets to Hardhats efforts.

Labor Commissioner Click Bishop said, “It’s incredibly important that we’re training our rural job center staff about Helmets to Hardhats, so staff can connect Guard members and other veterans with a program that will put them into apprenticeships.”

Ed Flanagan, Alaska Works’ veterans’ outreach coordinator and the state coordinator for Helmets to Hardhats, met recently with employment liaisons from Guard units throughout the state and is preparing a special Helmets to Hardhats outreach letter to distribute to Guard members now serving in Kuwait.

“Since the inception of Helmets to Hardhats in Alaska in 2003, the department’s vet reps have been a critical element in the program’s success here,” Flanagan said. “A very large percentage of Alaskans registered with H2H since 2003 have been referred by the Alaska Department of Labor. We make sure department staff are fully informed and trained on the system so they may continue to provide this necessary service.”

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Since 2003, 120 Alaska veterans and service members registered with Helmets to Hardhats have been offered apprenticeship opportunities in Alaska.

For more information about Helmets to Hardhats, go to the program's Web site at [www.helmetstohardhats.org](http://www.helmetstohardhats.org).

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