



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DART Expands Regional Workforce Network Through New Partnership with Vets to Drones

Collaboration creates pathways to high-wage careers in advanced air mobility

Santa Cruz, CA — July 22, 2026 — Monterey Bay Drone Aviation and Robotics Technology (DART) and Vets to Drones announced a strategic partnership designed to connect military veterans with career opportunities in advanced air mobility and emerging technology sectors. The collaboration combines DART's expertise in workforce development and cross-sector facilitation with Vets to Drones specialized drone training programs, creating a comprehensive pathway for veterans to transition into high-wage, high-growth careers.

The partnership will provide veterans access to drone pilot certification, advanced technology training, and direct employment connections through both organizations' industry networks. Participants will benefit from scholarships, mentorship, and job placement support designed specifically for service members and veterans seeking meaningful work in cutting-edge industries.

"This partnership with Vets to Drones exemplifies DART's mission to build equitable access to quality jobs in emerging sectors," said Josh Metz, Executive Director at DART. "Veterans bring discipline, leadership, and technical aptitude to the workforce. By combining our infrastructure and training expertise, we're creating real pathways for veterans to thrive in advanced air mobility—an industry positioned for explosive growth in California and across the nation."

Chris Lewis, founder of Vets to Drones, emphasized the mutual commitment to veteran success. "Veterans deserve opportunities that match their skills and work ethic," Lewis said. "Partnering with DART gives us the resources to scale our training programs and connect more veterans with employers actively hiring in the drone and autonomous technology space. This is about building a community of veteran professionals."

The initiative aligns with growing demand for skilled operators in the advanced air mobility industry, which is projected to create thousands of jobs over the next five years. By focusing on veterans—a population with lower unemployment but higher underemployment in fields matching their qualifications—the partnership addresses both a talent shortage and a critical workforce equity gap.

Under the agreement, DART and Vets to Drones will collaborate on workforce training, employer engagement, shared educational resources and program evaluation to strengthen employment outcomes for veterans.



About the Partnership

Both organizations are committed to expanding this collaboration to include additional training modules, regional expansion, and partnerships with employers actively recruiting veteran talent in aerospace, autonomous systems, and related fields. The partnership builds on DART's growing network of workforce initiatives connecting education, industry and public agencies throughout California's Central Coast and beyond. For more information about training opportunities and employment pathways, visit **mbdart.org** and **vetstodrones.org**.

About Monterey Bay DART

DART (Drone, Aviation, and Robotics Technology) is a California-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit catalyzing growth of the low-altitude economy through workforce development, infrastructure support, and cross-sector ecosystem building. DART connects industry, education, government, and community partners to advanced air mobility, uncrewed aerial systems, and robotics innovation while expanding access to quality jobs. Learn more at www.mbdart.org.

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