



Judging from the feedback received after the recent ninth annual NASWA Veterans Conference, this year's event was another success.

Approximately 500 people attended this year's conference, and 202 attendees completed a survey to let us know what they thought. This year's conference was the first held in person since 2019, after two years of virtual events.

A total of 132 attendees said their overall experience was excellent, and another 49 said it was above average. Ten called it average, but no one said they had a bad time. A wide variety of topics and sessions were winners – such as the keynote speakers – especially Master Sergeant Cedric King and General Stanley McChrystal - the USDOL pre-con session, the workshops, and the opportunity to network with their peers from across the US.

The majority of people in attendance were DVOPs and LVERs, and most attended a previous NASWA Vets Conference, either virtually or in person.

We learned a few things this year – like not having a keynote speaker over lunch, and that we need to rename/rework "pre-con" so more states will allow people to attend. We had a number of requests for topics and speakers that have been featured at previous conferences, so perhaps it is time to bring them back. Other suggestions focused on room size and space, food, air quality, length of conference (either too short or too long,) etc. Some liked the assigned seating, others did not. Planning is already underway for our 10th conference, August 2-4, 2023, at The Grand Hyatt in Washington DC.

Survey Comment Highlights

"All of the guest speakers were phenomenal! Jennie Taylor provided a much different perspective than what we usually hear, that was a nice change."

"I left the conference feeling motivated to do my job better."

"I was able to network with some great employers and collaborate on how to best serve our veteran community."

"There was nothing new revealed to me. It was the same things being repeated."

"There were a myriad of reasons to love the conference. To listen to General McChrystal speak on leadership; retired MSG King cover relentless resiliency; Mrs. Babs Chase and the staff cover virtual reality for the military community; Ms. Janice Fidalgo speak on the certification program for Grow with Google. The speakers and all topics and subjects were of epic proportion from my foxhole. I cannot wait to see what will be in store for the 2023 NASWA Veteran Conference."

"As a DVOP in a rural location, I tend to feel alone up here in the mountains and so do my Veterans. The conference has allowed me to make connections to support my Veterans and hoping to get them to focus on areas of the country that are remote/rural locations."