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SEPTEMBER + OCTOBER 2017 VOLUME X ■ ISSUE 5

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Stacy Wiggins
senior vice president of operations,
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- <https://recruitmilitary.com/events>
- 127 on- and off-base events in 2017, 125 on- and off-base events in 2018; schedule on page 12
- 6 virtual events in 2017; schedule in magazine

Read this magazine

- Articles about successful veterans in Corporate America
- Digital replicas of this issue and back issues accessible from <https://recruitmilitary.com/resources/search-employ>

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**MAXIMIZE
YOUR EMPLOYEE
RESOURCE
GROUP**
Page 36



▲ JAMES BINION, LEFT, CONFERS WITH A COLLEAGUE AT THE ATLANTA OFFICE OF POWER HOME REMODELING. PHOTO COURTESY OF POWER HOME REMODELING

Contents ▼ SEPTEMBER + OCTOBER 2017 VOLUME X ISSUE 5

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 / A NOTE FROM CHRIS | 27 / UNITING THE POWER OF MANY AT EATON
Eaton |
| 6 / WANT EDUCATION?
40 PLACES TO LOOK | 32 / A MISSION TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE AT AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH |
| 8 / STOP & SHOP OFFERS A FRESH CAREER FOR VETERANS
Stop & Shop | 42 / ARMY OFFICER BRINGS LEADERSHIP AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS TO CARMEUSE LIME & STONE |
| 10 / HOW TO WORK OUR JOB FAIRS | 44 / THESE 100 RETAIL COMPANIES WANT TO HIRE YOU! |
| 12 / DAV/RECRUITMILITARY VETERANS JOB FAIRS CALENDAR | 46 / INTERESTED IN HEALTHCARE? CHECK OUT THESE 40 EMPLOYERS |
| 16 / INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT: HEALTHCARE | 48 / ADVERTISERS INDEX |
| 20 / INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT: RETAIL | |
| 24 / COMMITTED TO VETERANS AT FARMERS INSURANCE
Farmers Insurance | |

A Note from Chris



by CHRIS CRAVENS

In this issue, we focus on two industries that are always evolving and providing new opportunities to those in the field: healthcare and retail.

A great deal of the change in these industries has to do with technology.

Consider retail, for example. Brick-and-mortar stores are seeing less foot traffic, while online stores are booming. The reason for this? Better and smarter technology makes it easier and more convenient than shopping in an actual physical store. Here at RecruitMilitary, we are always invested in knowing the job market trends that may be beneficial to the veteran community.

► VETERANS IN HEALTHCARE

Though many jobs in the medical field require additional training, even with a medical background in the military, do not lose hope. This does not mean you are not proficient and knowledgeable in your field. It simply means that certain practices and procedures may be done differently in the civilian world than when you served, and you'll need to adapt to them.

According to Director of Talent Acquisition at Health Carousel and U.S. Marine Corps veteran,

Matt Disher, the transitioning servicemember has many options to get into this field, one way or the other. "If you already have medical background and appropriate certifications, it may be as simple as finding a job where you'd like to work," Disher said. But jobs in healthcare are not limited to becoming a doctor or a nurse. "These industries require support staff, leadership, staffing, technology/IT, accounting, logistics, HR, and so on," Disher added.

In fact, Disher explained, "The disparity is huge between open healthcare industry positions and professionals to fill them. There are a number of reasons for this, including higher care standards, a growing patient population, and a number of healthcare professionals soon reaching retirement age. By 2025, the shortage of registered nurses is expected to grow to nearly 260,000."

Disher wants veterans to know that "Healthcare staffing, billing, technology, operations, and devices are all experiencing explosive growth, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. If you haven't made up your mind where you should be after your transition, healthcare is a safe bet for a bright future with many options."

► VETERANS IN RETAIL

Many of the talent requirements that are currently being sourced in the retail industry are technical in nature. Fortunately, with GI Bill benefits and expedited training pipelines, veterans could find themselves leading in the retail

industry, should they continue their education in technical and ecommerce educational programs.

Companies like Amazon and The Home Depot, both among the top 10 largest retailers in the United States, heavily source veteran talent. These retailers value soft skills like teamwork, drive, accountability, and flexibility. These are characteristics that many civilians may not have, and for those that do, it likely took longer to develop them than a recently transitioning 22-year-old servicemember.

Overall, it continues to be beneficial to be a veteran job seeker. As a veteran, you perform to higher standards, easily overcome obstacles, and advance quicker than your civilian counterparts. Our team at RecruitMilitary looks forward to helping you in your job search, whether it takes you to the healthcare industry, retail industry, or another field entirely. Your success is our success, and we wish you the best of luck in your job hunt.

Chris Cravens is national director of candidate acquisition at RecruitMilitary and a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He served eight years with the U.S. Marine Corps, with three tours overseas in Fallujah and Ramadi in Iraq and the Sangin Valley in Afghanistan. He also served three of his eight years with Naval Criminal Investigative Service as a federal investigator with their protective operations department at the Pentagon.

— ★ ABOUT ★ —



RecruitMilitary, the publisher of *Search & Employ*®, is a full-service military-to-civilian recruitment firm that connects job seekers who have military backgrounds with employers, franchisors, and educational institutions. RecruitMilitary is a division of Bradley-Morris, Inc.

Our hiring services are free to men and women of all ranks/rates and all branches of the service who are transitioning from active duty to civilian life, veterans who already have civilian work experience, members of the National Guard and Reserves, and military spouses and other family members.

In addition to publishing *Search & Employ*, we produce Veteran Job Fairs throughout the United States, operate a job board and a database of more than 1,000,000 registered job seekers at www.recruitmilitary.com, email a monthly jobs newsletter called *The VetTen*, maintain a website that carries links to employers' sites and careers pages, and conduct direct recruiting.

The majority of RecruitMilitary's senior officers and most of our other employees have served in the armed forces. RecruitMilitary was founded in 1998 by Drew Myers, formerly a captain in the United States Marine Corps.

In 2011, RecruitMilitary received the first annual Lee Anderson Small Business Veteran and Military Spouse Employment Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes program. The program recognized RecruitMilitary as a specific business that has "gone above and beyond to honor the sacrifices our military families make in their service to our nation."

In 2012, RecruitMilitary received the first annual One More Way Award from The Sierra Group Foundation. The foundation established the award to recognize people or companies whose support results in awareness of, and job opportunities for, people with disabilities. The Sierra Group Foundation (www.thesierragroup.com/foundation.htm) is a non-profit organization whose mission is "to drive up employment for people with disabilities, including veterans."

In 2013, RecruitMilitary was a finalist for the Capital One Award for Small Business Veteran and Military Spouse Employment – an award bestowed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes program.

RecruitMilitary is a member of the International Association of Employment Web Sites and is accredited by the Better Business Bureau. Company headquarters are in Loveland, Ohio (Greater Cincinnati).



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These schools have demonstrated their commitment to the education of veterans by using RecruitMilitary products and services. All URLs listed are live links in digital Search & Employ®, accessible from <https://recruitmilitary.com/resources/search-employ>.

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<http://centuracollege.edu>

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Campbell University	https://online.campbell.edu
Columbia Southern Education Group	www.csegroup.com
National Communications Training Centers	www.nctcfiber.com

■ Argosy University	www.argosy.edu/military
■ Asher College	www.asher.edu
■ California College San Diego	www.cc-sd.edu
■ California Lutheran University	www.callutheran.edu
■ College of Instrument Technology	www.heavyequipmentoperatorschools.com
■ Dallas Baptist University	www.dbu.edu
■ DeVry University	www.devry.edu/admissions/military.html
■ Education Corporation of America	www.ecacolleges.com

■ Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	https://erau.edu/veterans
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■ Heavy Equipment Colleges of America	www.ok-cc.com
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OFFERS A FRESH CAREER FOR VETERANS★

▲ STACY WIGGINS AND HER STORE OPERATIONS TEAM PRESENT A CHECK TO THE NEW ENGLAND USO.



Stop & Shop, a division of Ahold USA, started as a corner grocery store in Somerville, Massachusetts, in 1914. Today, Stop & Shop is a 411-store chain with 65,000 employees and roots that run deep in hundreds of communities throughout New England, New York, and New Jersey. As it was in 1914, Stop & Shop's commitment starts and ends with its customers.

Stop & Shop is committed to being a better neighbor by feeding the hungry, supporting organizations that advocate nutrition and exercise, supporting veterans, and raising funds for pediatric cancer treatment and research. In 2016, Stop & Shop donated close to \$30 million in cash and product to charitable organizations and hunger relief organizations throughout New England, New York, and New Jersey.

► Supporting Veteran Employees

Stop & Shop is dedicated to supporting and honoring veterans and their families. One way the organization accomplishes this is through Stop & Shop's Veterans Business Resource Group (BRG), which participates in a host of programs and activities to support Stop & Shop associates who are members of the military community. The group also raises funds for community veteran agencies in New England, New York, and New Jersey.

Events hosted by the BRG include:

- The annual Stop & Shop golf outing, which supports various veterans' organizations.
- The Memorial Day Flags for Vets event, where group members plant flags on veteran gravesites at Bourne National Cemetery.
- Participation in the Veterans 5k Run each November.
- Sponsoring an annual summer picnic for veterans and their family members in Connecticut.
- Supporting the Massachusetts Military Heroes Fund in Boston.

The Veterans BRG also has an informal mentorship program. The mentorship program started when a member of the BRG learned about a veteran employee who was having difficulty transitioning to civilian life. The veteran had used other support services, but he wanted to talk with another combat veteran who might understand what he was experiencing. The Veterans BRG connected him with peers within the organization and established a network to support him through his time of need.

► A Background of Service

The Veterans BRG is headed by Stacy Wiggins, Senior Vice President of Operations for Stop & Shop. In this position, she primarily focuses on the operations, financial performance, and merchandising aspects for 211 stores located in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and parts of Connecticut. Additionally, she is responsible for ensuring the effective execution and roll-out of all company initiatives and the creation and execution of competitive intrusion strategies.

Wiggins has 23 years' experience in the retail sector. Prior to joining Stop & Shop, she held various executive positions at Ahold USA divisions, including serving as regional vice president of operations for Giant-Carlisle and as regional vice president of operations for the Metro Division of Stop & Shop. For over 18 years, Wiggins worked in various managerial positions at Wal-Mart, where she began her retail career as an hourly associate in Mechanicsburg, PA.

In 2011, 2013, and 2016, Progressive Grocer named Wiggins as one of the Top Women in Grocery. She currently serves on the Advisory Board of the Greater Boston Food Bank and on the Board of Directors for the South Shore YMCA in Massachusetts.

Wiggins spent four years in the Army as a specialist, where she worked as a graphic illustrator and was trained at the U.S. Air Assault School. Her enlistment added to a tradition within her family: her husband, brother, son-in-law, and two nephews have served either in the Marine Corps or the Air Force.

"The transition from the military to civilian life was easier for me than for many others," Wiggins said. "I was only in for four years, and a month after getting out, I married a Marine. As many people know, being married to someone in the service is very similar to being in the service yourself."

► Translating Military to Civilian Life

In her four years in the Army, Wiggins learned many things that she carries with her 30 years later. "I went in as an 18-year-old who needed direction and discipline, and I got just that. I learned what being on a team really meant, the importance of dependability, the need for structure and discipline, and the importance of attention to detail in everything that you do. I learned the importance of not thinking only of yourself, but to always think about the impact of your actions on everyone around you."

Those lessons have helped her in every step she has taken in her civilian career. "If I think about the role that I am in today, those values are still a core part of what I do and how I act," Wiggins said. "I have more than 35,000 associates who depend on me to keep them safe, make good deci-

sions, and to give them guidance."

"My experience in the Army also gave me the confidence to believe that, if given the opportunity, I could do anything I set my mind to. Sometimes I sit back and think about how much my role is like being in the military. It is my job to ensure that we build a great team in order to move the business forward, and just like in the military, we are made up of all different types of people with different skills, abilities, drives, and desires."

When building a team, Wiggins ensures that it has a healthy mix of talents and abilities to make it well-rounded and effective. "I saw that practice in the Army. It is important to know your own strengths and understand that everyone has different strengths. You need a team when you go to battle. When picking my team members, I ask myself, 'Would I go to battle with them?' It's not a question of would they fight and defend, but rather, would we be successful as a team."

► Leading in the Community

Even though it might not be apparent at first glance, Wiggins believes that there are many similarities between Stop & Shop and the Army.

"People might think, 'How hard can the grocery business be? You put peas on the shelf.' But it really is so much more than that. People depend on you to keep them safe, to give them choices, to take care of their family's nutrition, be the leader in their communities, and to help them put food on their tables," Wiggins said.

"To achieve that, we need leaders who pay attention to detail, are disciplined, organized, and structured. We need people who will not waver and will be there in times of need. These are all things you learn in the military."

Being a community leader, Wiggins points out, involves a great deal of integrity. "People count on you every day to do the right thing. So you see, there isn't much difference in the line of thinking between my company and the military, which makes us the perfect fit for veterans. We employ hundreds of veterans in senior leadership and in the field, and we are proud to do so."

Another reason veterans do well at Stop & Shop is because the core values of both organizations are similar. "When I returned to the civilian world after being engulfed in the military lifestyle for so long, I noticed a lack of discipline and professionalism. At Stop & Shop, our associates are expected to be professional and disciplined in our team-based, family atmosphere. That is why veterans are a perfect fit for Stop & Shop - they already live those values."

► Wiggins' Advice for the Job Search

No matter what career path veterans take, Wiggins believes they should be proud of their military experience. "The best advice that I can give to men and women who are leaving their military careers and heading into the civilian life is to be yourself. Be proud of the fact that you have served. That experience is a strength," she said. "I have interviewed too many veterans who do not mention that they have served in an interview. It is always tucked somewhere in the resume. You need to shout it out. When you sit down to write your resume, really think about all that you accomplished in the military. Do not just focus on your MOS. Focus on the skills that you learned along the way."

At Stop & Shop, veterans remain a welcome addition. "I get excited and very interested when I see military experience on a resume. We need detail-focused, organized, dependable, disciplined, and structured people with the ability to lead others and hold others accountable. We want people who are able to listen, learn, and teach," Wiggins said. "We are always looking for great leaders in our organization."

▼ STACY WIGGINS AT AIR ASSAULT SCHOOL AT FORT RUCKER, AL.





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How to Work Our Job Fairs



by **ROBERT WALKER**

There are opportunities all over the room at a DAV | RecruitMilitary Veterans Job Fair — job opportunities with employers, opportunities to go into business for yourself with franchisors who value your ability to get the job done, and opportunities to advance your education via online and on-campus learning. How do you find the opportunities that are best for you? Below are some tips on interviewing with recruiters at a military-to-civilian job fair.

DRESS FOR THE PART. If you are on active duty or attending the event on a Reserve or National Guard drill day, wearing your uniform is great. In all other cases, you should wear the same civilian outfit that you would wear to a one-on-one interview at an employer's place of business. And that should be, if you have it, a business suit or a business casual outfit, complete with jacket.

STAY ENTHUSIASTIC If a recruiter asks you to email your resume to his/her company. The recruiter is not brushing you off. In fact, being asked for the email is a good sign. Many companies require their recruiters to gather resumes by email: (1) to obtain HR information as required by law and (2) so they can direct desirable job seekers to different departments.

TRY TO GET TO ALL OF THE BOOTHS, even those that may not seem as though they have any opportunities for you. An employer's name or primary industry does not necessarily indicate what openings the company is trying to fill. For example, a drugstore chain may be recruiting for positions in transportation/distribution or accounting.

Even if you are not going to the event to discuss continuing your education, talk with the recruiters at the booths for educational institutions. Today's institutions deliver learning opportunities in many ways other than traditional, full-time, daytime classes on a campus. A few minutes of conversation may lead to an unexpected continuing-education solution that is right for you.

I have similar advice for job seekers who have not been thinking of going into business for themselves. Franchise opportunities are available in a tremendous variety of fields. Arranging for financing may be easier than you think, with surprising discounts available to veterans. Stop by the franchisors' booths—one of them may very well have a plan that matches your interests and your situation.

MEMORIZE YOUR STORY. Before you go to employers' booths, create some talking points. Put together a 30-to-60-second "story" about yourself that includes some of your successes and areas of interest. Be ready to discuss how your military experience relates to the civilian workplace. You should also prepare yourself for a long, detailed interview—employers have hired people on the spot at our events.

FOR MORE TIPS, read these *Search & Employ*® articles by our editor, Elizabeth Stetler:

- "I Ask About Recruiters' Best Practices," March-April 2016, <http://rmvets.com/SE49rbp>
- "Recruiters' Advice for Job Seekers," July-August 2016, <http://rmvets.com/SE51ajs>
- "What Job Seekers Want to Know," September-October 2016, <http://rmvets.com/SE52jsw>

Robert Walker is vice president of sales at RecruitMilitary and a veteran of the United States Army. He is available at robert.walker@recruitmilitary.com.

The Overall Scene

► Where do you start?

Your first stop at a DAV | RecruitMilitary Veterans Job Fair will be a registration desk, where you will fill out a brief form (unless you have pre-registered) and receive a list of the organizations—called “exhibitors”—that have booths at the event.

At many of our job fairs, organizations present pre-event seminars on subjects such as “Understanding Education and Your Career Plans,” “Become Your Own Boss,” and “Five Steps to Informed Financial Transition.” The seminars usually begin at 10:00 or 10:30.

The job fair itself begins at 11:00. When you enter the actual job fair area, you will see many closely spaced exhibitor “booths”—tables and various displays. At the booths, recruiters who represent the exhibitors will talk with you.

► Who will be the exhibitors?

A wide variety of exhibitors attend our events—corporate employers, law-enforcement agencies and other government employers, franchisors, and both campus-based and online educational institutions.

The corporate employers are engaged in construction, defense contracting, energy production, manufacturing, security, transportation and logistics, engineering, healthcare, finance, insurance, information technology, retail, and home services, to name just a few industries.

Their recruiters interview for all kinds of jobs: salaried, hourly, and part-time; professional and technical.

► Will the lines be long?

At most booths, at most events, no. The events run for four hours – from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. – and average about 7 job seekers per exhibitor. Lines are usually longest immediately after an event opens at 11:00 a.m., and they taper off significantly by around 1:00. But I need to tell you this: Sometimes, a long line forms at one or two booths when an event opens, and the lines are still there when the event officially closes. This is often the case for large, high-profile defense contractors that are hiring. But the recruiters almost always stay over and talk with everybody in line. So it comes down to: *Who wants the jobs?*

► Do I have to pre-register?

No, but I recommend that you do so – for three reasons:

1 \ HELP YOUR BUDDIES

Pre-registering prevents the lines at our registration desk from building up, especially during the early hours of the events.

2 \ HELP US

Pre-registering helps us evaluate the effectiveness of our event marketing – which, in turn, helps us boost the turnout of veteran job seekers – which, in turn, makes our events more attractive to employers – which means more job openings to discuss at the events.

3 \ HELP YOURSELF

When you pre-register, you immediately join our database of 1,000,000+ veteran job seekers, which is continually being searched by employers.



Military veterans and reservists are some of our best employees because we share so many of the same values: integrity, discipline, and leadership. And with on-the-job training and guidance you can build an ownable, long-term career from day one. If you're looking to continue your professional growth—in brokerage, operations, customer service, or IT, for example—take a look at Schwab.

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—Stephen Shaw, U.S. Army, 2003–Present
Team Manager, Account Solutions



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2017-2018 DAV | RECRUITMILITARY VETERANS JOB FAIRS ★

All of the dates in this schedule have embedded links in the digital replica of *Search & Employ®*, which is accessible from <https://recruitmilitary.com/resources/search-employ>. Each link points to a web page for that specific event. You can navigate from that page to a pre-registration form for the event. You can access a live map of our events by visiting <https://events.recruitmilitary.com>.

ATLANTA, GA

October 5, 2017
February 1, 2018
June 21, 2018

AUSTIN, TX

October 12, 2017
April 5, 2018

BALTIMORE, MD

October 12, 2017
February 8, 2018
May 31, 2018

BIRMINGHAM, AL

August 16, 2018

BOSTON, MA

April 5, 2018
August 30, 2018

CAMP PENDLETON, CA

October 3, 2017
June 14, 2018

CHARLOTTE, NC

October 26, 2017
May 3, 2018

CHICAGO, IL

October 12, 2017
April 19, 2018

CINCINNATI, OH

September 28, 2017
May 24, 2018

CLEVELAND, OH

August 30, 2018

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

November 1, 2017
May 31, 2018

COLUMBIA, SC

September 21, 2017

COLUMBUS, OH

November 2, 2017
March 29, 2018

DALLAS, TX

November 16, 2017
March 1, 2018
May 10, 2018
August 23, 2018

DAYTON, OH

July 26, 2018

DENVER, CO

April 19, 2018
August 23, 2018

DETROIT, MI

November 16, 2017
June 14, 2018

FORT BLISS, TX

September 19, 2017
April 26, 2018

FORT BRAGG, NC

November 8 - 9, 2017
March 21 - 22, 2018
June 13 - 14, 2018

FORT CAMPBELL, TN

December 13, 2017

FORT HOOD, TX

December 7, 2017
July 26, 2018

FORT KNOX, KY

December 12, 2017
June 21, 2018

FORT LEE, VA

April 5, 2018

FORT RILEY, KS

September 14, 2017

FORT STEWART, GA

April 12, 2018
August 9, 2018

FORT WALTON BEACH, FL

May 17, 2018

HOUSTON, TX

September 7, 2017
November 30, 2017
March 8, 2018
June 7, 2018

HUNTSVILLE, AL

March 29, 2018

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

December 7, 2017
July 12, 2018

JACKSONVILLE, FL

November 30, 2017
February 15, 2018

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, WA

October 25, 2017
January 18, 2018
July 26, 2018

KANSAS CITY, MO

March 22, 2018

LAS VEGAS, NV

December 7, 2017

LOS ANGELES, CA

November 2, 2017
April 26, 2018

MIAMI, FL

September 7, 2017

MILWAUKEE, WI

October 26, 2017
May 17, 2018

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

October 12, 2017
April 26, 2018
August 16, 2018

NASHVILLE, TN

September 14, 2017
February 8, 2018

NEW ORLEANS, LA

March 1, 2018
August 2, 2018

NEW YORK, NY

September 14, 2017
March 8, 2018
May 24, 2018

NORFOLK, VA

November 2, 2017
May 17, 2018

OAKLAND, CA

May 3, 2018

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

October 26, 2017
January 25, 2018

ORLANDO, FL

December 14, 2017
April 19, 2018

PHILADELPHIA, PA

November 16, 2017
March 22, 2018
August 9, 2018

PHOENIX, AZ

September 21, 2017
February 15, 2018
June 7, 2018

PITTSBURGH, PA

October 19, 2017
March 29, 2018
July 19, 2018

PORTLAND, OR

September 28, 2017
May 10, 2018

RALEIGH, NC

January 25, 2018
August 16, 2018

RICHMOND, VA

February 15, 2018
August 23, 2018

RIVERSIDE, CA

October 12, 2017
February 1, 2018

SACRAMENTO, CA

January 18, 2018
July 19, 2018

SAN ANTONIO, TX

January 11, 2018
May 17, 2018
August 30, 2018

SAN DIEGO, CA

November 30, 2017
March 1, 2018
August 2, 2018

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

October 5, 2017

SAN JOSE, CA

March 8, 2018

SEATTLE, WA

December 7, 2017
May 24, 2018

ST. LOUIS, MO

November 9, 2017
July 12, 2018

TAMPA, FL

January 11, 2018
July 19, 2018

TULSA, OK

April 12, 2018

WASHINGTON, DC

November 9, 2017
March 22, 2018
June 21, 2018

VIRTUAL JOB FAIRS

CENTRAL REGION

September 26, 2017

EASTERN REGION

November 28, 2017

WESTERN REGION

October 24, 2017

TESTIMONIALS OF JOB SEEKERS AT RECENT EVENTS

CHARLOTTE / MAY 4

■ This is my second DAV/RecruitMilitary veteran's job fair that I have gone to since moving to Charlotte. I love these job fairs because (1) They are in great locations, and (2) Great exhibitors come out and really help job seekers. – *Army Spouse*

OAKLAND / MAY 4

■ Thank you DAV and RecruitMilitary for setting up this veterans job fair at the Oakland Coliseum! Every employer/recruiter welcomed me with an extremely positive and approachable attitude. – *Coast Guard*

COLUMBUS / MAY 10

■ It was an excellent experience, helping me figure out my career path as well as gaining valuable information from the exhibitors in attendance. – *Navy*

OMAHA / MAY 11

■ There was good variety as far as the types of markets represented. Bring resumes and don't get tunnel vision. Be willing to branch out into different careers. – *Air Force*

NORFOLK / MAY 11

■ Great mix of companies as well as plenty of information to better your knowledge. – *Navy*

DALLAS / MAY 11

■ I was very impressed with this job fair. If you are a veteran or current military looking for a job, this is a must. Well organized, multitude of vendors, and positive vibes. I've had three interviews since the fair, which has provided options, rather than setting. Thank you! – *Air Force*

LAWTON / MAY 18

■ It was good to see job opportunities in fields I never thought of. – *Army & Marine*

MILWAUKEE / MAY 18

■ The employers were nice, engaging and open to have conversations with. – *Marine*

SAN ANTONIO / MAY 18

■ Good number of employers present. Very good networking possibilities. – *Army Spouse*

FORT WALTON BEACH / MAY 24

■ Pre-fair communications were excellent. The list of employers helped me locate specific job openings I wanted to discuss. Being able to practice talking to HR people in the various industries about myself was helpful. – **Army**

CINCINNATI / MAY 25

■ This event had a great selection of companies with a great variety of positions. I think this one, by far, has been the best I have been to. I made some great connections. – **Air Force**

NEW YORK CITY / MAY 25

■ Great location and great companies. – **Navy**

SEATTLE / MAY 25

■ Everyone was very helpful, even if the company wasn't the right fit. They helped by telling you about other prospects who might need your skills. – **Army**

WESTERN REGION VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR / MAY 31

■ It was nice to be able to hang out in the chat rooms as long as I wanted to see what questions others were asking and to be able to revisit to ask questions as they came up later. – **Marine**

BALTIMORE / JUNE 1

■ Lots of opportunities for personnel who are leaving the military with fresh skills that are in demand. – **Navy**

COLORADO SPRINGS / JUNE 1

■ All recruiters that I dealt with were very open and forward about potential opportunities. – **Air Force**

FORT KNOX / JUNE 7

■ The organization of the job fair was very good. Good variety of exhibitors. – **Army**

HOUSTON / JUNE 8

■ Met with great company representatives. Received a lot of positive feedback. – **Army**

PHOENIX / JUNE 8

■ Great variety of prospective employers to speak with. I was able to secure two interviews, one of which resulted in a job offer within a week of attending the job fair! – **Marine**

FORT BRAGG / JUNE 14

■ I love that they always have someone from all walks of life there to help you land a job or career in the civilian world.

– **Army Spouse**

DETROIT / JUNE 15

■ Both the exhibitors and the staff went out of their way to be helpful. – **Navy**

LOS ANGELES / JUNE 15

■ Of great value to recently discharged veterans who may need training and/or educational counseling. – **Army**

ATLANTA / JUNE 22

■ Probably the best job fair I have attended to date. – **Air National Guard**

WASHINGTON DC / JUNE 22

■ The job fair was very organized and extremely professional. – **Army**

CAMP PENDLETON / JUNE 20

■ The variety was great! This job had something for everyone, and I strongly feel that everyone benefited from the efforts put into this event. – **Marine**

ST. LOUIS / JULY 13

■ It was very well attended by vendors, and they were very helpful with lots of information. They took time to look at my resume. – **Army**

INDIANAPOLIS / JULY 13

■ Ready and willing companies were in attendance. Communication with attendees pre-event were great. – **Coast Guard**

TAMPA / JULY 20

■ The job fair was well organized, and the people were very friendly and encouraging. There was diversity in the types of job opportunities. I thought it was as good as it gets. – **Army**

SACRAMENTO / JULY 20

■ All the staff who organized the event were excellent. The recruiters were forthcoming about answering any questions that the job seekers asked. Also, recruiters had excellent information about each position. – **Navy**

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INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT:

HEALTHCARE +



by HEIDI LYNN
RUSSELL

HEALTHCARE is currently one of the hottest industries in the nation for job hunters. Even if your military occupational specialty (MOS) was not in this area, there are plenty of open doors to gain training and education in any number of the burgeoning healthcare fields. This field offers long-term job stability, as the nation becomes “older” with aging Baby Boomers.

Employment in healthcare occupations is projected to grow a whopping 19 percent – much faster than the average for all occupations, according to the Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. Expect to see 2.3 million new jobs by 2024.

Veterans bring unique skills and personal qualities to this industry. “Because of your commitment to public service, it is not difficult to find a career where you see the direct impact of your work,” said Richard Sebastian, former petty officer (PO2) with the United States Navy. Sebastian separated from the Navy in 1994 and has worked in physical therapy ever since. “The physical therapy industry alone has a 34 percent projected 10-year job growth, which means jobs will be plentiful even a decade from now,” Sebastian said.

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To launch your job search in any of the healthcare job niches, Sebastian offers this advice:

"I would start by building a professional network on one of the professional sites like LinkedIn. Doing this will help you to connect with former and current mentors and to be able to talk to and communicate with people in the area or areas that you are interested in," said Sebastian, who is regional director at ATI Physical Therapy, headquartered in Bolingbrook, IL.

Even better, with some areas like physical therapy, you will automatically be a hot commodity, he added.

"If you make it through physical therapy school and pass the licensure exam, you won't have to worry about contacting employers because they will most likely reach you first. The field is growing, and there is a shortage of qualified physical therapists," he said.

Obviously, physical therapy is not the only option available. There are plenty of other occupations in the healthcare industry that feed into or support medical professionals. Some examples:

- **Diagnostic Medical Sonographers** operate special imaging equipment to help physicians diagnose medical conditions.

- **Dieticians and Nutritionists** are experts at using food to promote health and manage disease.

- **Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics** care for the sick and injured in emergency settings.

- **Medical Transcriptionists** convert physicians' voice recordings into written report.

Let's delve into a couple of the higher growth healthcare specialties you might want to explore, the qualifications you need as a veteran, and education or training you will need to reach your professional goals: nursing and physical therapy.

► Nursing

Employment for both registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) is projected to grow 16 percent by 2024, another faster-than-average pace. The national average salary for LPNs, who provide basic nursing care, is \$44,090. For RNs, who give more advanced treatment, the average annual salary is \$68,450.

"There will always be individuals who need medical care and education concerning their illness," said Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing for the Metropolitan State University of Denver Jean Rother, MS, RN. "Also, as our population continues to age, geriatric nursing in caring for the elderly will expand by leaps and bounds. It's an excellent field."

Most people think of nursing in a hospital setting, but there are ample

Continued on Page 22



RICHARD SEBASTIAN



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INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT:

RETAIL

// By Heidi Lynn Russell //

★★★

Retail is much more than a “sales gig.” The retail industry offers a myriad of options for both full-time and part-time job seekers, in addition to long-term job stability. In this industry, staying ahead of market trends is a must. This industry is a flexible one; organizations that adapt to advances in technology and globalization succeed. And those organizations need employees who can think on their feet and provide high-quality customer support.

Think of this industry as “low-hanging fruit” for the job hunter who is coming out of the military. The retail industry has staying power; two-thirds of the U.S. gross domestic product derives from retail consumption. Plus, consumers’ demand for products, services, and food means employees are constantly needed. But because of misperceptions about career options, many employers struggle to find competent workers. The result? Companies are always looking for candidates with a can-do attitude, leadership skills, a service-oriented mindset, and a strong work ethic.

Your military experience may translate well into the retail landscape. You likely already meet many of the requirements for open positions with your advanced technological skills and experience in managing logistics. Whether you realize it or not, you have people skills, too! Think about how often you worked on teams with a diverse group of people when you served in the military. That experience gives you a hand-up in dealing with clients and customers.

The retail industry is a place to grow and learn. Whether you are into e-commerce and online shopping, promoting hot trends, working on a sales team, running a business, managing a restaurant, solving inventory challenges, or even stopping store theft, you will find a host of opportunities in this arena.

While there are many varied occupations from which to choose within the retail industry, distribution and e-commerce are growing the fastest, according to Phil Andrews of the Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Union. “Amazon, Wal-Mart, and startups are building new logistics facilities and hiring people to staff them. Those jobs have higher pay and better hours than cashiers and greeters. While these positions are higher paid, they [can sometimes involve] health and safety issues.”

However, if you enjoy customer interaction in regular brick-and-mortar stores, retailers are anxious to hire you. Many brick-and-mortar companies hype personalized service as a way to compete against online selling giants.

“Across the board, the most important thing is be comfortable interacting with people all the time,” Andrews said. “That’s the main point of the job. If you’re willing to learn, you can learn about any kind of product and apply your skills to any retail store. My advice would be if you’re interested in one type of product or service – computers, fashion, sports or DIY/ home improvement – try those first. You might enjoy the job more.”

► Pick Your Passion

According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), every year, thousands of veterans begin careers at retailers of all sizes. For example, Wal-Mart’s “Veterans Welcome Home Commitment” has hired more than 92,000 veterans since 2013. Many other retailers, such as Home Depot, Amazon, and Starbucks, have military-specific hiring and retention programs.

The retail industry employs millions of workers – supporting 42 million American jobs – or one in four – and has nearly 3.8 million retail establishments. And if working for a small company appeals to you, 98 percent of all retail businesses employ fewer than 50 people, according to the NRF.

You might think running a cash register is your only job option in retail. But 44 percent of those in the industry do not work in a sales position. And skilled jobs in grocery pay well, Andrews noted.

If you doubt whether there is a place for you and your unique skills or knowledge, here are some examples provided from the NRF of non-sales jobs in the retail industry and the number of people who fill each of those roles.

- 91,000 artists and designers
- 71,000 bakers
- 51,000 protective service workers
- 28,000 merchandise displayers and window trimmers

Continued on Page 28

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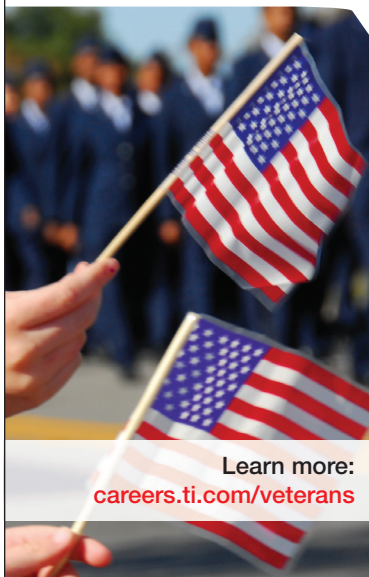
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Continued from Page 17

HEALTHCARE 

opportunities available in all kinds of work spaces - from nursing homes, to school nurse offices, to clinics in far-flung rural areas with little to no healthcare options.

"If you live in a rural area, one great option is to become a nurse practitioner (NP). You get a master's degree and obtain professional certification, work with a physician, and prescribe medications. Most patients are seeing them now," Rother said.

Another area is psychiatric nurses, or advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), whose average annual salaries are about \$88,000, according to PayScale. In this occupation, you might work with senior citizens who suffer with bipolar disease or schizophrenia. You could also use this specialty training to work at the VA Clinic and work on a unit for those suffering with PTSD.

"Nursing is no longer a female-dominated field," Rother added, "especially as more veterans who served as medics pursue nursing jobs.

"We are seeing more and more males every year. That's a new trend," she said. "Experience as a medic would be a very good transition to the field of nursing. Nurses need excellent communication skills, the ability to work alone or with others on the team, critical thinking, a tolerance for



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stress, flexibility, compassion, and to be physically fit," she said.

► To Break In ...

Here is a summary of the training you need for various levels of nursing:

■ **The Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) or Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)** do not require a college degree. However, training would involve attending an accredited vocation school or community college. You must pass an accreditation exam to become licensed, and the length of time for this education is seven to 24 months.

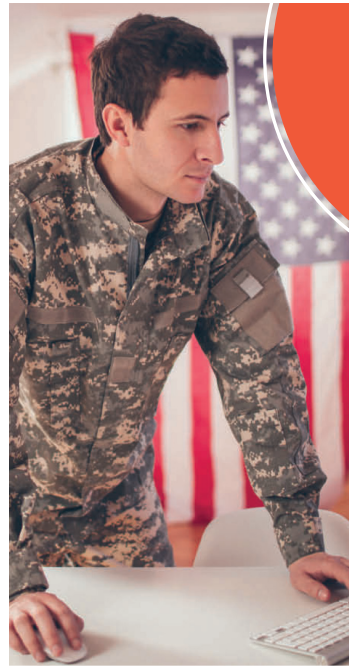
■ **Associate Degree Nurse (ADN)** requires students to attend a vocational school or community college, and the length of time to complete this degree is 18 to 24 months. Graduates are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

■ **Registered Nurse (RN)** requires a bachelor's degree. Talk to the academic advisor at your university on how you can pursue it. For example, at Metropolitan State University of Denver, there are two nursing programs. "The traditional nursing option (TNO) is a four-year B.S. nursing program. Students are accepted into the TNO nursing courses in the junior and senior year. Graduates are eligible to apply to take the NCLEX-RN," said Rother. "On the other hand, the accelerated nursing option is a 17-month, semester-based program. It is designed to offer students who have a non-nursing baccalaureate degree the opportunity to earn a B.S. in Nursing. Graduates from this program are also eligible to apply to take the NCLEX-RN."

► Physical Therapy

"Physical therapy can be a wide open field for veterans with the right

Continued on Page 26



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TIM FELKS

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Air Force veteran and Head of Property Claims Tim Felks describes his experience transitioning from the Air Force to finding a rewarding career within the Farmers Insurance Group of Companies®.

// DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT ROLE AT FARMERS AND YOUR PREVIOUS MILITARY EXPERIENCE.

I am currently the head of property claims at Farmers Insurance, after starting with Farmers 20 years ago as an auto physical damage (ADP) claims representative. I assumed my current role three-and-a-half years ago and am responsible for handling homeowner and recreational product claims for Farmers. Over the course of my career, I have held multiple roles, including field claim representative, branch claims supervisor, field claims manager, claims director, and head of Mountain West Auto Zone. Today I live in Southern California with my wife Suzanne.

More than 20 years ago, I was in the Air Force where, as the crew chief,

I served as an aircraft maintenance technician on the F-15. I served for a total of eight years, having been stationed at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida for four years, and then at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska for four years. I went on multiple deployments around the world during my time in the military, including Operation Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Southern Watch, and numerous temporary duty assignments.

// IF YOU COULD GIVE ANY ADVICE TO A MILITARY MEMBER ABOUT TO TRANSITION FROM SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I would advise military members to prepare for what you want to do, but make sure you leave yourself open to the idea that you may not end up in that field. I would tell them to think about transitioning from service to civilian life like declaring your major in college: While your intent may be to get into one career field, you also need to be open to multiple career options.



I earned my college degree and A&P (Airframe and/or Powerplant) license, which is the certificate you need to be a civilian aircraft mechanic, while serving in the Air Force. I had worked part-time at the airport in Anchorage doing aircraft maintenance on jumbo jets, and I had prepared myself to become an aircraft mechanic or aircraft engineer—something in the aviation field.

However when I left, nothing presented itself except for one or two lower-paying jobs. So for me, it was very difficult to make the transition from military aircraft mechanic, an aerospace industry professional, to basically nothing.

// HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE A VETERAN AT FARMERS?

One of the things I started to do at Farmers, which I had not done before joining the organization, was to think about my military skills in a different light. It was not about my technical skills; it was about the leadership competencies I learned in Airman Leadership School. I began to ask myself, 'What leadership competencies did I use in the service, and how do those translate into civilian competencies?' Because leadership is leadership, whether it is in the military or a civilian job, and when I learned to lean on those competencies and those strengths, that is when my career took off.

// HAS BEING A VETERAN INFORMED YOUR WORK AT ALL?

I really lean on the leadership skills I learned in the Air Force. One of the things they taught me at Non-Commissioned Officer Preparatory School was about followership. To be a good leader, you also need to know how to be a good follower. I do not see that mentioned very often in books about leadership, and I do not see it as a skill people talk about when discussing leadership. But when you are a part of a team, you have to know when to submit to the authority of your boss, the counsel of your team, or when to step up and lead. I think that is a skill I learned in the military that has served me well, and it also helps with humility.

// IF YOU COULD GIVE ANY ADVICE TO EMPLOYERS WHO WANT TO HIRE VETERANS, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Take the time to fully understand what veterans can bring to the table. Often, the veterans themselves may not fully understand how their military training translates into leadership competencies, so take the time to educate yourself. A veteran's leadership skills are second to none.

// WHAT IS THE FARMERS INSURANCE VETERANS & ADVOCATES EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP (ERG)?

First, an ERG is an organization formed to act as a resource for both group members and the organization. ERGs, such as the Veterans & Advocates Employee Resource Group, are voluntary, employee-led groups that can have a few members or a few thousand.

One of the many Employee Resource Groups at Farmers is the Veterans & Advocates ERG, which focuses on supporting our current veterans, as well as attracting more to Farmers by increasing awareness, understanding, and respect for the visible/invisible differences, and supporting veterans through their transition to civilian and corporate life.

// WHAT DOES THE VETERANS & ADVOCATES ERG MEAN TO YOU?

The Farmers Veterans ERG is a great place for veterans to build a community, share their experiences, and basically help each other through the transition from military service to civilian success. To me, it means that Farmers cares about its veteran employees, about veterans having successful careers at Farmers, and helping veterans navigate the transition to civilian jobs.

// WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES HAS THE VETERANS & ADVOCATES ERG SPECIFICALLY INFORMED AT FARMERS?

Farmers has a strong history of community engagement and volunteerism, one the Veterans & Advocates ERG is proud to engage in as well. Through the sounding board of the Veterans & Advocates ERG, Farmers Insurance launched its Suits for Soldiers program, which aims to collect and donate suits and business attire to military veterans preparing to make the transition from service to civilian life.

Farmers launched Suits for Soldiers nationally in October of 2016, with the goal of collecting 50,000 items that can help create an easier transition for veterans into the civilian workforce. The total now exceeds 70,000 pieces of attire.

More recently, we helped the Women's Inclusion Network (another Employee Resource Group at Farmers) raise money to build tiny houses for a nonprofit in Kansas City. The houses will be built by Farmers Insurance employees. We have also helped raise money for "For the Troops," an organization in Simi Valley, California, that sends care packages to deployed active duty military members. We have helped package and send over 700 care packages. And those are activities we continue to do on an ongoing basis.

Veterans can visit www.farmers.com/careers/veterans-resources/ for additional resources to aid in the transition to the civilian workforce.

▼ MEMBERS OF THE VETERANS & ADVOCATES ERG PARTICIPATE IN A SUITS FOR SOLDIERS DONATION EVENT WITH CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY MEMBER MATT DABABNEH. PHOTOS COURTESY OF FARMERS INSURANCE



training, and even for those with no training at all," Sebastian said. "It is also important to find a physical therapy provider, such as ATI Physical Therapy, who strongly supports and encourages veterans to develop and grow their careers in the physical therapy field," he added.

There are many jobs in the field, such as a physical therapist, physical therapy assistant, rehabilitation technician, patient service specialist, and business development manager. The average salary for physical therapists is \$85,400. For physical therapist assistants and aides, who work under the supervision of the physical therapist, the average salary is \$45,290.

Physical therapy is broken up into three main categories: inpatient, outpatient, and home health.

■ **Inpatient physical therapy** is usually done in the hospital or rehabilitation center and consists of getting a patient healthy enough to return home after an injury or surgery.

■ **Outpatient physical therapy** is done when a patient can be brought to a facility by themselves or with family to receive care. Outpatient therapy has several subspecialties such as sports medicine, orthopedics, geriatrics, and so on.

■ **Home health physical therapy** is done when a patient is at home because they are unable to go to an outpatient rehabilitation center, due to health issues. In this case, the therapist will go to the patient's house and perform therapy with the purpose of helping the patient grow strong enough to go to outpatient physical therapy.

"Physical therapy is one of the jobs commonly known for the highest levels of job satisfaction. This is because one of the most satisfying components of a job is helping people to achieve their goals," Sebastian said.

A physical therapist must be able to balance many tasks and lead a team to help maximize the benefits and outcomes for each patient. "If you enjoy being a part of a team to help a patient reach their goals, then physical therapy is the right profession for you," Sebastian said.

"The military, in my opinion, is a perfect training ground for future physical therapists. The military conditions you to be sensitive to time and work in a regimented environment, while also training you to be in a leadership role," Sebastian added.

► To Break In ...

"If you are interested in breaking in, becoming a rehab tech or aide would allow you the opportunity to see how a clinic operates," Sebastian said.

If you are a military physical therapist already, you can work almost anywhere in the country without having to look too hard for a job.

"Physical therapy jobs are in high demand. Sign-on bonuses and other incentives are common practice in order to get the highest qualified individuals," Sebastian said.



Heidi Lynn Russell is a freelance writer based in Lexington, KY. She has been writing about employment issues affecting military veterans and spouses for the past 15 years.

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Uniting the Power of Many at Eaton

After 20 years in the United States Navy, Ben Cook retired as a commander. Now he works at Eaton as the industrial sector lead program manager, where he is responsible for the oversight of the program management office within the engine air management (EAM) product group. In this role, he is responsible for all new product development programs that are launched to support EAM. He ensures that Eaton's products are launched in accordance with its internal PROLaunch system while maintaining budget, timelines, and the quality expected of Eaton products. He ensures a plan exists to transition the program from design to a product that Eaton can manufacture. In addition, he is responsible for all functional training and career progression for the ten program managers that work for him.

Cook began his career at Eaton in 2014 and quickly moved up the ranks. In 2015 Cook was promoted to program management lead. In 2016, he was selected as one of the participants of the Advanced Leadership Zone Training. He was designated Eaton's business systems evaluator and as an operational excellence evaluator. This year, Cook was selected to lead Eaton's Veteran employee resource group (ERG).

► Cook's Advice to Veterans

How does your experience help you on the job?

The communication skills I learned in the military are extremely valuable. As an aviator, I performed daily flight briefs. This is where I learned to provide leadership with accurate and succinct summaries. More importantly, I learned how to give and receive feedback. In the military, there never was a perfect flight so we always gave feedback to see if we could do it better next time. This helped me prepare for the civilian world where there is always room for improvement. It doesn't matter if it's in a manufacturing process, a contract negotiation, or a presentation. Knowing how to give and receive feedback will help you succeed.

What do you recommend for those who are separating from the military and looking for civilian opportunities?

Find an industry that interests you, then think what you would like to do within that industry. Tracking down job titles can be a challenge. There

are thousands of jobs, but the title is not always self-evident. Attend job fairs and talk to recruiters. Use LinkedIn to find veterans in your targeted company and reach out to them. Ask if they would either directly refer you, or if there is a military recruiter you can contact. Don't blindly apply for a position and assume you will get called.

What makes Eaton a good place for veterans?

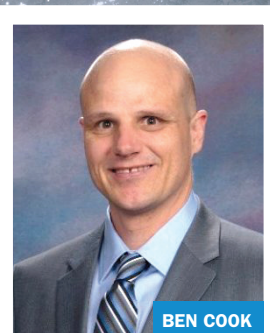
We understand personal leadership transfers very well from the military to the civilian job force. Most importantly, and honestly one of my biggest attractions to the company, is that Eaton's ethical values align very well with the selfless value system military members have.

Eaton is also making a concentrated effort to create an inclusive and diverse culture, which includes the Veteran ERG. The purpose of the Veteran ERG is to help integrate the experience, values, and knowledge of Eaton's veteran workforce into the Eaton business system. We like to say that we unite the power of many into the power of one. We also use this opportunity to connect with veterans and use their expertise to aid and support the business with recruitment, development, and retention of veterans through company and community engagement.

What advice do you have for transitioning/veteran military who are trying to land a position with Eaton?

Learn as much as you can about our various power management businesses to decide which business is the best fit for you, then reach out to our military recruitment lead. Don't shy away from your military service in interviews and be honest about your experiences. We value people who have demonstrated that they are agile learners so use your experiences to illustrate your ability to quickly learn new skills.

To view current openings at Eaton, please go to www.eaton.com/militarycareers.



BEN COOK

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And as Andrews noted, employment at web-based retail companies has increased the most, with 145 percent growth over the last decade. If you are looking for a hot field, you need look no further.

► A Full-Time Career Option

The majority of retail employees – about 70 percent – work full-time. Military officers and other veterans who already have college degrees may be interested to know that one-third of retail employees over age 24 have degrees, and one in seven has an advanced degree. Store managers have the responsibility of running their business and helping their associates grow in their careers, which requires discipline and the ability to lead.

“If this is your first foray into job hunting outside of the military, you may need to work your way up into management,” Andrews said, “but if someone has leadership experience and is a natural leader, it’s not difficult to move from sales associate to assistant manager or team lead and go up the ranks. The path to advancement is to look for promotions from within and get experience at one place. Then move to a different store that is higher end.”

When shopping around – so to speak – for a retail employer, Andrews suggested conducting heavy research on its workplace ethics. “Glassdoor.com can be helpful to find criticism from current employees. And search for news stories about lawsuits against the company,” he suggested. However, as with most reviews, it is also important to bear in mind that often you will see only one side with sites like Glassdoor. Anonymous complaints tend to be written by those with extremely strong opinions. Content or neutral



▼ PHIL ANDREWS STANDS IN THE H&M ON 34TH STREET IN MANHATTAN. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE RETAIL, WHOLESALE & DEPARTMENT STORE UNION

employees will rarely leave a review.

Also, nothing beats face-to-face questioning as you shop in the mall. “It doesn’t hurt to go to the store and ask casually, ‘I’m looking for a job. Is this a good place to work?’ People will often just tell you right on the spot,” Andrews said.

► The Part-Time Worker's Rights

Working part-time at a retail job allows for a great deal of flexibility. If your priorities lie elsewhere, say, in finishing your college degree or taking care

Continued on Page 30



Captain Andre Carr, United States Army - 18 years; Assistant Project Manager, Skanska USA - 3 years

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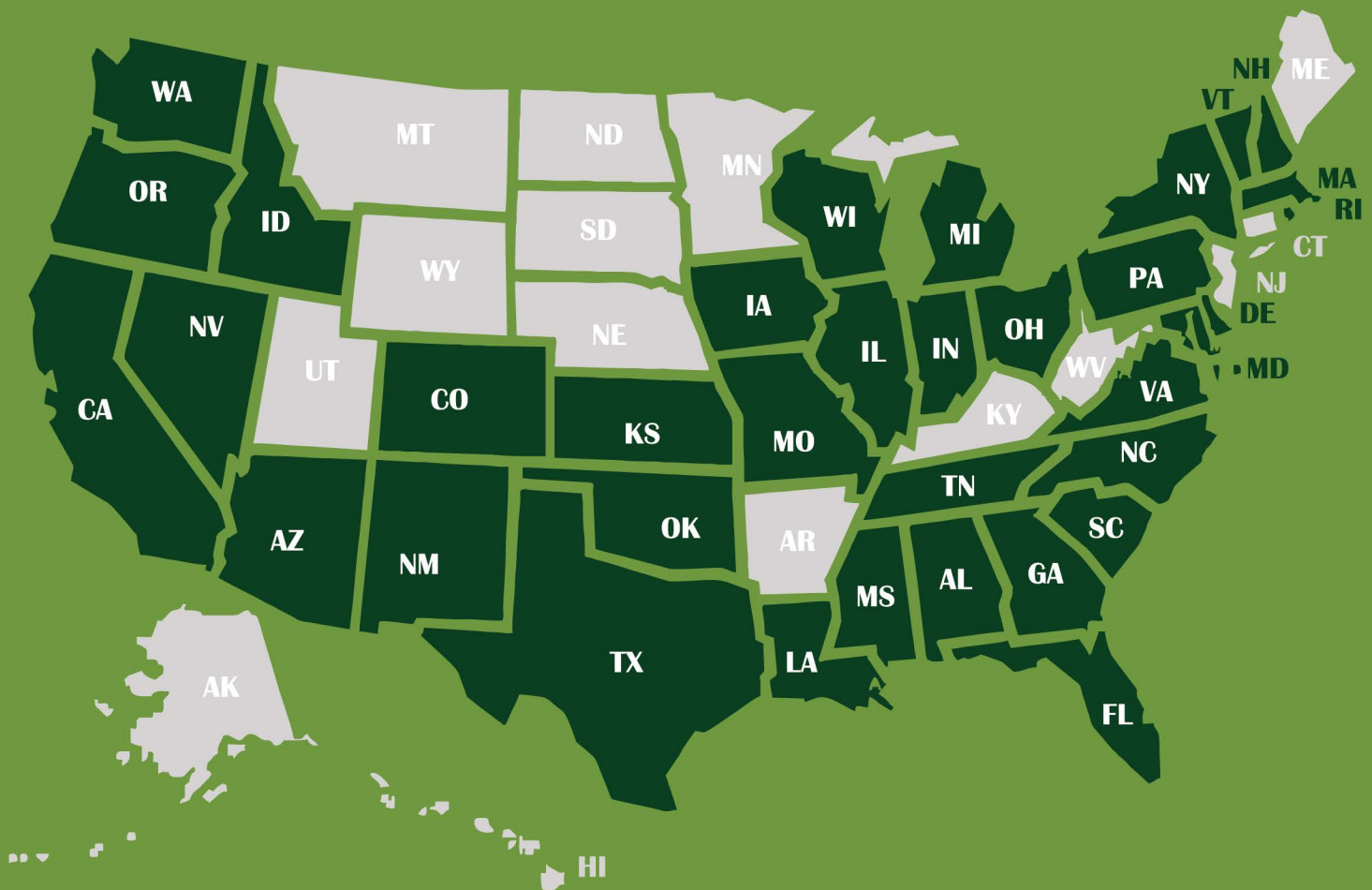
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of family, this might be a good option for you. It is also a popular practice. About one in three retail salespersons works part-time, according to the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

However, it is important that you are educated on your rights as an employee. This is not to say that all employers will look to take advantage of you and your part-time status, far from it. But part-time employees often work almost as contractors. They are allowed the flexibility in schedule but often must give up stability and benefits in return.

Veterans, especially, can be vulnerable to what Andrews calls "employee abuse," which is a term for when an employer does not respect their employee's rights. This is because veterans have worked in the military sector for a great deal of time and may not be savvy to what is acceptable in the civilian workforce.

"There are some self-protection steps [you can take] so that companies do not take advantage of you," Andrews said. First, Andrews recommends looking for retail companies with a union. A union is an independent organization that is accountable to you and will inform you of your rights, as well as keep you up to date on benefits you might accrue as you gain seniority.

"The number of unionized retail stores is quite low, but the number of grocery stores is on the higher end. The best way to find out if an employer is unionized is to look up the unions in your area. For retail, look for the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union (RWDSU), or in grocery, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and ask them, 'What employers are hiring, and what would you recommend?'" Andrews said.

Meanwhile, if you find yourself without union representation, here are a few guidelines Andrews recommends to navigate the retail landscape:

- Be careful of an employer who pays "off the books" or in cash. In most cases, this is because the company is small and does not have a sophisticated payroll system. But if you hear something like: "If you work over 40 hours, we pay you in cash," that means that company is trying to avoid paying you overtime. As an hourly employee, you are entitled to overtime if you work over 40 hours in a week.
- Be wary of two ways you could be misled and work overtime hours unpaid:
 - ▶ The offer of salaried position that doesn't come with a set number of weekly hours. Your hours could steadily increase while your pay remains the same. Make sure it's clear the hours you will be expected to work up front. Note: All non-managerial and non-professional positions should be paid hourly not salaried.
 - ▶ You may be offered a "promotion" that is in name only. While your work might not change, your new title may exempt you from getting overtime pay.
- Do not let an employer adjust your hours worked. For example, if you worked 50 hours one week and 30 the next, do not let your employer adjust it to show 40 hours for both weeks in order to avoid paying you overtime.

As long as you are aware of your rights as an employee, navigating the retail scene should not be an issue. Most employers are not looking to take advantage of their employees. If an infraction happens, it is usually due to the high amount of moving parts involved in working in a thriving industry. An employee who understands workers' rights is a valuable employee. It is also a way to demonstrate your capacity for leadership and integrity.

Overall, the wide range of career options combined with flexibility make working in retail a challenging and rewarding endeavor. Do not let misconceptions dissuade you from finding an engaging career in this field. Take your skills and your interests and put them to work in the retail industry. You may be surprised at the outcome.

★★★

Heidi Lynn Russell is a freelance writer based in Lexington, KY. She has been writing about employment issues affecting military veterans and spouses for the past 15 years.

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and evaluation, American Institutes for Research's (AIR) mission is to use the best science available to bring effective ideas and approaches to enhancing everyday life. For AIR, making the world a better place is not wishful thinking; it is a goal that drives the organization.

Founded in 1946 as a not-for-profit organization and headquartered in Washington, DC, AIR conducts its work with strict independence, objectivity, and non-partisanship. Other locations in the United States include New York City, Austin, Chicago, Boston, San Mateo, and Chapel Hill.

AIR works with federal and state governments, foundations, and non-profit organizations to address some of today's most challenging issues in the areas of education, health, and workforce. The intellectual diversity of its 1,800 employees enables the organization to bring together experts from many fields in the search for innovative answers to challenges that span the human life course.

Diversity is not defined just by race or gender. It encompasses the whole human experience — age, culture, education, skills, and life stories. Inclusion celebrates differences so that talented people from any background can contribute to a richer work environment, more useful and effective research and services, and greater professional potential. AIR's commit-

ment is about fully integrating diversity and inclusion into its strategy, culture, people and the work they do.

To accomplish this, they have a comprehensive four-pillar strategy. "The first pillar is about people and investing in the organization's human capital" says Chief Diversity Officer at AIR, Monica L. Villalta. "We have a diversity council and six employee resource groups representing diverse populations." The three remaining pillars revolve around cultural competence, the organization's identity, and opportunities for individual and organizational growth.

AIR offers former military personnel an organization dedicated to improving the lives of the disadvantaged. This mission is closely aligned with the military commitment to serving the country and protecting citizens.

Another area where AIR is closely aligned with the time-sensitive, mission-oriented, and rule-driven training one receives in the military is the need for adherence to guidelines and procedures. This is especially important in their research and program evaluation division, as well as the infrastructure division, which includes facilities management, finance, technology, and human resources. According to Villalta, these functional work areas are ideal for military personnel due to the discipline required around procedure, attention to detail, and time management.



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JACK BUCKLEY

★ ★ ★

A VETERAN SUCCESS // JACK BUCKLEY

Jack Buckley is senior vice president at AIR, where he started working in January 2017. Buckley leads the organization's research and evaluation area, where he oversees projects across AIR's entire range of subject areas. These areas include education, health, and workforce development, both in the United States and internationally.

After graduating from Harvard University, Buckley entered the Navy and served five years as a surface warfare officer and nuclear reactor engineer, leaving as a lieutenant (O-3). He had several positions while serving, including ordnance and anti-submarine warfare officer onboard USS Kauffman (FFG-59), and reactor controls division officer onboard USS South Carolina (CGN-37).

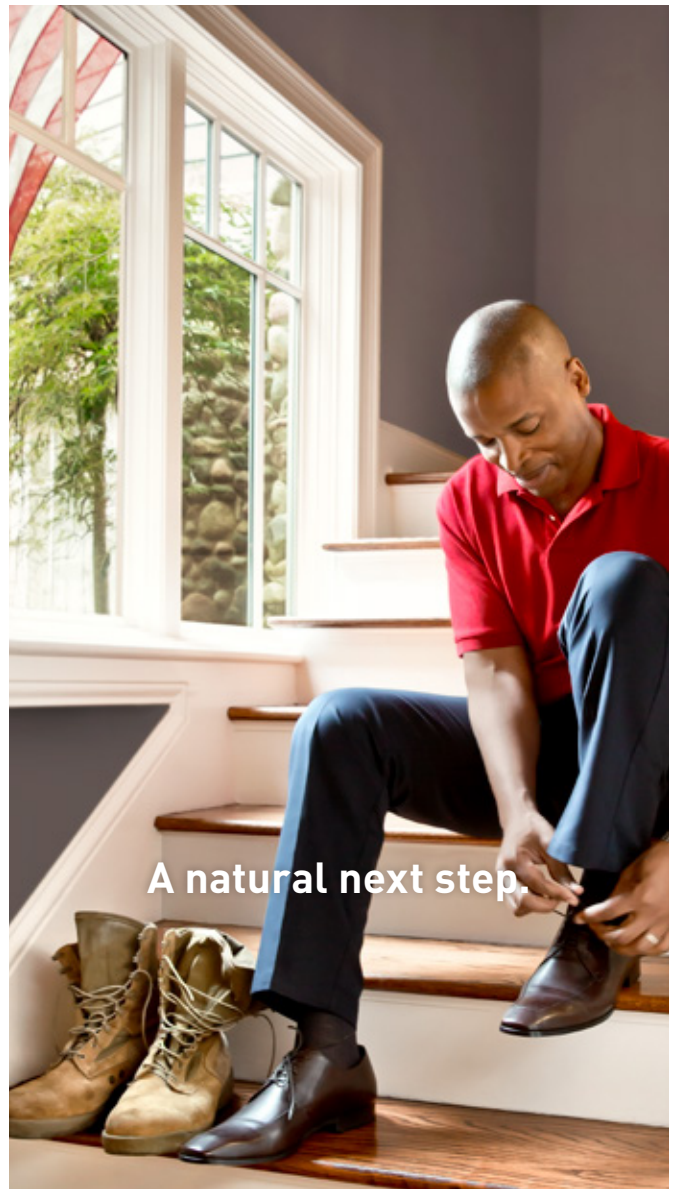
As senior vice president within the company's professional services division, Buckley is responsible for leading and implementing the firm's strategic vision for its research and evaluation services. His position requires strong leadership skills and the ability to effectively manage and collaborate with teams of professionals with diverse cultural and demographic backgrounds, skill sets, content expertise, and work experiences. Fortunately, Buckley's military training gave him a very strong foundation for such skills and abilities.

As a junior officer, he was responsible for leading and managing several divisions with a complex range of tasks. "Having that experience right after college and very early in my career pushed me to grow as a leader and manager very quickly," Buckley said. "I learned that, to be an effective leader, I needed to build trust and establish clear and open communication with my team and other officers. It was essential to mission success."

Buckley's experience in the military also required him to develop an acute attention to detail. When it came to complex projects, such as planning a cruise missile strike or deactivating and safely disposing of a ship-board nuclear reactor, he had to focus on everything from the big picture to the smallest minutiae. This skill now helps him hone in on the detailed requirements of a federal, state, or international government contract and ensure his teams are designing solutions that meet requirements and follow all government guidelines to the highest standards of quality.

In addition to applying many of the leadership, technical, and project management skills learned during his service in the military, Buckley was very attracted to AIR because he believed in its mission to improve the lives of people, especially those who are disadvantaged. "I believe that many other veterans who share a passion for serving our country may feel the same way. People who want to help others should consider a career at AIR."

As veterans explore civilian careers, Buckley advises, "Remember that your training and experiences are appealing to a wide range of organizations. Pursue career opportunities that align to your values. That will help you stay engaged, interested, and feeling fulfilled."



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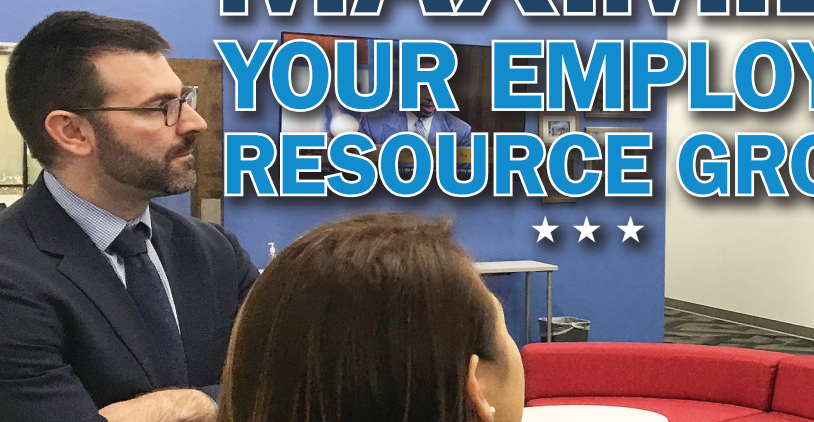
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MAXIMIZE YOUR EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP

▼ JAMES BINION SPEAKS WITH COLLEAGUES AT THE MONTHLY VET BREAKFAST AT POWER HOME REMODELING IN ATLANTA. PHOTO COURTESY OF POWER HOME REMODELING

YOUR
POTENTIAL



by HEIDI LYNN
RUSSELL

When former Army Sergeants James Binion and Michael Richardson left military service, they felt like outsiders at their first civilian jobs. Interactions with coworkers at their new jobs felt stilted, awkward, and strained. At times, it felt like they did not belong.

"I'm very proud [to have served in the military]," Richardson stated. He is now an outbound marketer for Power Home Remodeling in Tampa, FL. Early in his civilian career, before he started at Power Home Remodeling, he detected what he felt was "a different atmosphere" at his civilian workplace. "It's not a stigma, but [it felt] uncomfortable," Richardson said. Eventually, he left that job, hoping to find the right fit.

Richardson landed at Power Home Remodeling last year; Binion, six months ago. Today, they rely on an employee resource group (ERG) that the company has specifically designed for veterans, called Power Veterans Initiative (PVI). The PVI provides an instant connection to those with military backgrounds, including military family members. Through the PVI, members receive support for issues that affect only the military community, such as adjusting to post-military life.

ERGs are a collection of workers who join together based on shared characteristics or life experiences. Some companies also call them affinity groups or business resource groups (BRGs). ERGs have formed for women, African Americans, Hispanic/Latino, Asian Pacific Islanders, and others. But as more military members have exited the service, companies are increasingly adding veteran-specific ERGs.

The mission of ERGs varies among companies, but usually they are tasked with recruiting members of a certain group, setting up programs to foster their careers and education, establishing support networks for new employees in the group to assimilate into the corporate culture, and building relationships in the community with volunteer outreach. The intent is to strengthen the employees so that they can progress with confidence in their careers while also providing support and mentorship from those with similar backgrounds.

Kynnie Martin is the senior foundation representative at Xcel Energy, where she launched a veterans' recruiting program in 2013. Now she oversees Xcel Energy's national veterans' BRG. As a former Army captain and intelligence officer, she understands the benefit of giving veterans a platform to connect and network. Her advice to job-seeking veterans? "Don't be shy about asking recruiters if their company has [an ERG] for veterans. Get



▲ MICHAEL RICHARDSON MEETS WITH COLLEAGUES IN THE KITCHEN AT POWER HOMES REMODELING IN TAMPA. PHOTO COURTESY OF POWER HOME REMODELING

connected to [the ERG members] so you can ask them about their experience" she said.

When checking out an employer on LinkedIn or their web site, look for the presence of an ERG. It is often as simple as searching a company's "diversity" page, or keying "resource group" on their web site.

"Any company can submit hiring numbers to say they're 'veteran-friendly,'" Martin said, "but if they have an ERG, it shows veterans are supported by veterans in the company."

Managers at companies that implement ERGs said they have noticed that new employees, especially new employees that are veterans, gain a great deal of confidence after getting involved with the groups.

"We're like the central nervous system. We bring along the tools and policies, then we empower veterans to be dynamic, independent, and unique. This gives them strength to integrate with the local communities," said Michael Hansen, who organized the ERG effort at Power Home Remodeling.

Hansen added that veterans "lose a huge sense of purpose, community, and camaraderie" after they leave active duty service. The ERGs "give opportunities to vets and spouses to relive and redefine their sense of purpose. A lot of times, they're working with groups like Habitat for Humanity in the community. So we find a way to cross the line from employee development to making them into people living happier lives. We have found they will perform at higher standards when they are able to focus on a sense of purpose and community. It is a way to define success - developing people first," he said.

When joining an ERG, expect an open-ended reception. However, you are in control of how much you benefit from the group and how involved you become. Most have noticed that the more involved they are with their group,

the more they feel supported.

For servicemembers and their families in the market for a civilian job, the presence of an ERG at a company signals an in-place support grid. The foundation is already there to help veterans grow and become acclimated. After an employee has assimilated into the company and the company culture, participation in an ERG can lead to valuable connections and career advancement. Of course, one of the most valuable elements about a veteran ERG is that if a servicemember misses the camaraderie from the military, the ERG puts them in touch with those who understand the military experience and can relate and reminisce.

Binion, who is now a remodeling consultant in Atlanta, said that Power Home Remodeling's "strong ERG was a huge selling point" when he was job hunting. "Once I on-boarded and became integrated with the ERG, I had constant motivation and mentorship."

Maximizing an ERG can boost your new career in untold ways. To Binion, being a member of the ERG brings back something he has missed from the military. "The power of this group helps us go to the next level, it brings back a sense of purpose," he said.

// TIPS FOR JOB HUNTERS

You can best leverage a company's ERG during the hiring process with these steps:

1 // Work with a "military translator" during your interview. You may not realize this, but civilian recruiters do not always recognize the acronyms and vernacular pertaining to your military occupations and experience. And while many companies are making great strides at training their recruiting and hiring team about military terms, some recruiters may too embar-



▲ KYNNIE MARTIN, THE XCEL ENERGY FOUNDATION REPRESENTATIVE IN THE STATE OF COLORADO, HOSTS A COMMUNITY PARTNER CELEBRATION ATTENDED BY THE ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING GRANT AWARDS, LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERS, AND VOLUNTEERS. PHOTO COURTESY OF XCEL ENERGY

assed or intimidated to ask you for a definition.

A company with a strong military ERG may ask a veteran employee to sit in on your interviews or discussions with hiring managers. Do not take this as a slight; rather, welcome the person gladly, and lean on him or her to help you explain what you did during your service in layman's terms.

Military spouse Heather Hancock oversees the veterans' BRG for employees for Xcel Energy in Texas and New Mexico. Hancock, designer II-engineering and construction, said her husband sometimes accompanies recruiters to interviews with veterans. There was one situation in which hiring managers were stumped by a veteran who answered an interview question with one word and then did not elaborate. Her husband had been sitting in on the hiring panel.

"He told the managers, 'This guy is just off active duty. He's trained to give a 'yes' or a 'no' and that's it,'" she laughed. "They ended up hiring him. He's a great employee."

Continued on Page 38

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▲ GARY PATTON SPEAKS AT A CACI NEW HIRE ORIENTATION ABOUT CACI'S VETERAN INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS.
PHOTO COURTESY OF CACI

Continued from Page 37

2 // Ask ERG members about the workplace culture. “Even if you don’t know anyone at the company, use LinkedIn to reach out to current employees,” said Nathan Sickels, a Navy veteran who manages affirmative action programs for Xcel Energy in Minnesota. “Start with the company’s military liaison on LinkedIn. Ask if you can connect with members of their veterans’ ERG. Explain that you would like to find out how they transitioned into the company, as well as any other advice. Veteran-friendly companies will have those contacts at the ready.”

According to Sickels, “One thing we’re good at in the military is networking. In your unit, you always

ask yourself, ‘Who are the go-to people?’ It’s one of those things that’s a common denominator. Tap into that using LinkedIn. Reach out and say, ‘I just wanted to connect and ask a few questions.’ LinkedIn is a fantastic way to talk to recruiters and former military.”

There are some companies who maintain a workplace culture similar to that of the military. “That transition from military is really hard – you have no idea what’s out there,” said Martin. “I have heard from a lot of employees that one of the things they love about [Xcel Energy] is that we are a regulated utility – a company of engineers and technically minded people. It fits the culture of the military. We have processes in place that reflect a lot about the military.”

3 // Look for military-friendly clues. “If a company is proud of the work veterans are doing, it will show when you walk into the place for your job interview,” said retired Army Major General Gary Patton. He is vice president of veteran outreach at CACI in Arlington, VA, where he heads up the defense contractor’s veteran ERG program.

ERGs will promote veteran appreciation events and host displays throughout the workplace to raise awareness about the military with their civilian employees. As a new hire at CACI, Patton saw the military-friendly atmosphere immediately.

“I chose CACI because of the shared military values and culture,” Patton said. “The instant I walked into the CACI lobby, I saw six tri-folded flags framed and on the wall, each representing fallen comrades, service members who were family members of CACI employees – two of whom served near me on a battlefield in Iraq in 2004. I related to the culture and values the instant I walked into the door at CACI. I’ve been here a year now, and I love my job.”

Some companies use their proximity to military bases to further their relationship with servicemembers. In Colorado, Xcel has a branch near Fort Carson. Members of the local veterans’ resource group visit the installation to conduct information and testing sessions for active duty members. They also provide insight on what it is like to work for Xcel. “Within the past 10 years, those on-site visits have resulted in many new [recently-separated military] hires from Fort Carson,” Martin said.

// TIPS FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

Sixty-five percent of veterans are likely to leave their first civilian job within the first two years of employment, according to a study released in 2015 by Syracuse University and VetAdvisor. An ERG can help you beat those odds.

As you gain your bearings in your new job and life, your ERG can become

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a center of gravity – a place where you can regroup and link up with fellow veterans, as well as receive the guidance for a successful career trajectory.

But to make the most of the opportunities, you must do your part and be involved. “Don’t be afraid to take a risk to get involved,” Binion said. When he first left the service and joined the civilian workplace, Binion felt somewhat vulnerable. “But it’s worth it to embrace that vulnerability so that you can connect with people who support you,” he said. “The only way to get better in your career is with your involvement.”

There are different ways you can engage with your ERG, but any or all of them will contribute to your vocation:

1 // Connect for support and career guidance. Not only can ERGs provide the camaraderie you may be missing since leaving military service, they also help maintain connectivity among employees for personal support and career guidance.

Some ERGs will provide a specific messaging system or communication channel just for veterans. Power Home Remodeling, for example, has one. “Regardless of the time, if you need to reach out, someone is there,” Richardson said. “It cuts away the stigma – it’s having a group of [people] that already understand when I need help. You’re not only encouraged but supported.”

Certain ERGs will also make sure you are maintaining pace in your career advancement plans. This includes your weekly goals and your plans for how to achieve them. “It keeps you motivated to be on task,” Richardson said.

Binion likes that veterans in his ERG help each other by discussing personal goals and mapping out where they want to be in a year and the steps needed to get there. “You can set goals all day, but if you’re not responsible for them, you won’t achieve them. The ERG makes sure you have accountability,” he said.

2 // Empower yourself with leadership roles. “Taking on leadership responsibility roles in an ERG forces you to network and also work on projects with fellow members,” said Sickels of Xcel Energy. “When you do a service project, the company may run an intranet news article. You’ll gain visibility, and people will seek you out for other things,” he said.

As the chair for Xcel’s veteran ERG in Minnesota, Sickels has also brought younger veterans on board for volunteering opportunities. “It gives you credibility,” he said.

And if you take on leadership roles, you also might be tapped to visit military installations to help recruiters decipher resumes and military jargon that they encounter among job applicants. As a representative of the company’s ERG, you can be on hand to answer any questions about the work environment and offer advice to those transitioning out of the military.

At CACI, nearly 200 veterans surveyed said they wanted to serve on committees ranging from media relations, to charity service, to contributing to business development concepts, Patton said, “It’s an engaged group. They’re hungry. They want to contribute,” he said.

3 // Mingle with top corporate executives. ERGs often have corporate “sponsors,” or top-level executives who work hand-in-hand with the group to help them crystallize their goals and organize activities. After getting to know you through your participation, they may make introductions to managers whose job openings fit your skills. They will keep you in mind for career advancement opportunities and discuss these options with you. They also can offer advice about your career trajectory and listen to your suggestions about ways to improve the business and/or work environment.

For example, recently at CACI International, the company’s “chief inventor” invited veterans to participate in an “Invention Think Tank Model,” Patton said.

Continued on Page 40



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"Maybe you were an Air Force maintenance NCO for 20 years and just got out. You've thought about a better way to troubleshoot the performance of an engine. We might get 100 innovative ideas like this from our veterans, but if even one is executable by our company, it is worth it. A program like this promotes the integration of veterans into the company. We are better integrating our veterans, and at the same time contributing to company success," Patton said.

You also may be paired with a mentor – someone who is not your direct supervisor but is high up in the company and can advise you about your career trajectory. At Power Home Remodeling, the ERG takes that one step further by providing mentors who "don't focus on who you are as an employee, but who you are as a person," Richardson said.

"They want to know, 'What can we do to enrich that veteran and his family?'" he said. The slight change in focus – to a veteran's overall wellbeing and support of his or her loved ones – shows employees that the company cares about them, Richardson added.

4 // Continue the mission with your local military community.

"When you join a civilian workforce, you may put away your military uniform, but you can still continue your mission," Patton said. It could be something straight-forward, like working for a defense company, even if your role is in something like IT or logistics. With an ERG, that service ethic also extends to volunteer activities in the community.

At Xcel Energy, for example, BRG members are "passionate" about supporting Honor Flight, an organization that takes war veterans to their respective memorial in Washington, D.C. "[Honor Flight will] charter the entire flight, and veterans and their sponsors are on it. We help them raise money to go," Hancock said.

In addition to helping raise funds for Honor Flight, Xcel Energy serves dinner

for those leaving on the trip. When the veterans come home, members of the BRG attend an event to welcome the veterans home. "It's rewarding for us," Hancock said. "We're now getting to a point where a lot of them are Vietnam veterans, and they didn't get a homecoming. So it's nice to give them that."

At Power Home Remodeling, veterans have done everything from 5K runs to staying in touch with fellow employees called up for service overseas. According to Richardson, "If you get involved in your company's ERG, keep an open mind. Do whatever makes you comfortable, whether it's volunteering, requesting a professional mentor, or just reaching out to talk to someone."

"Don't be afraid to reach out. Don't be afraid to ask what's available," he said. "If you never state what you want – the position, career path – it won't fall in your lap. Be vulnerable and be humble as well. You have the voice that you want to have."

Heidi Lynn Russell is a freelance writer based in Lexington, KY. She has been writing about employment issues affecting military veterans and spouses for the past 15 years.



▲ HEATHER HANCOCK, CAD DESIGNER – ENERGY SUPPLY, XCEL ENERGY.
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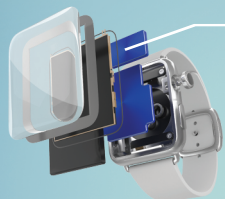
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▼ THE CARMEUSE LIME & STONE OPERATIONS TEAM LINES UP ON A CONVEYER BELT IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA. PHOTOS COURTESY OF CARMEUSE LIME & STONE



Army Officer Brings Leadership and Problem-Solving Skills to CARMEUSE LIME & STONE



by KATIE BECKER

Understanding the role of each military branch, the skill sets that come from each, as well as rank structure and the roles of military occupational specialties (MOS) are some of the barriers many civilian recruiters may face when attracting veterans to their organizations, according to Amanda Prestwood. Prestwood is the corporate human resources manager with Carmeuse Lime & Stone, and is responsible for the company's talent acquisition and strategy.

Carmeuse Lime & Stone is a leading manufacturer of lime and limestone products used to benefit the environment, and are used in steel manufacturing, power generation, road construction and land development, water and waste water treatment, pulp and paper production, and more. The company employs up to 2,000 workers across 28 production facilities in the United States and Canada, with North American operations headquartered in Pittsburgh.

"There's so much jargon in the military that recruiting veterans requires an extra level of probing," Prestwood said. "If a candidate tells you they

worked as a 91B (wheeled vehicle mechanic) in the Army, don't let that shut down the conversation. Go deeper by saying something like, 'Tell me more about that. What were your duties?'"

In late 2016, Carmeuse connected with RecruitMilitary to plumb its expansive database for candidates. Fast forward to spring 2017 and enter Mike Strunck. A former Army officer and company executive officer (XO), his logistics background made him a potential fit for a role as an energy buyer with Carmeuse.

After contacting him by phone, Human Resources Generalist Audra Beatty invited Strunck to stop by the Carmeuse booth at the RecruitMilitary Pittsburgh Veterans Job Fair, which happened to be taking place the next day. That request was a kind of test in and of itself. What level of initiative would he take? Would he come to the event?

As it turned out, not only did Strunck show up, the meeting went so well that he later landed the job. "We wanted to see how he presented himself. He was clean-cut and confident, with good eye contact and a good handshake. He had resumes on hand, and had done a little homework about us," Beatty said. "It was almost like a warm introduction for his formal interview. Going forward, we will now encourage our recruiting team to search potential candidates ahead of a hiring event and invite them to come."

// COMMITMENT TO HIRING VETERANS

"Veterans form a huge pool of talent at Carmeuse," said Prestwood. "Our company is 157 years old and has a long history of hiring military. It's all about the values they hold. Veterans will find the same types of values here at Carmeuse: a place where a company is willing to invest in them long-term, where there is opportunity, and where promotions and new skills can be developed."

Beatty noted, "Even though a veteran may not have ordered and arranged fuel sources in the past, he or she may have coordinated millions of dollars of equipment. They just need training on industry-specific roles. But they already have the leadership and are driven for success."



▲ AUDRA BEATTY AND AMANDA PRESTWOOD RECRUIT AT A JOB FAIR.

"Veterans are very committed and possess high levels of initiative and regard. Coming into the safety culture here at Carmeuse, they have already proven that they can think beyond just themselves," added Prestwood.

Prestwood conceded that one of the hardest parts of her job is helping veterans realize the many strengths they bring to the workforce. "They are already leaders, and they can be trained to our processes," she added.

// HELPING VETERANS ASSESS THEIR CIVILIAN SKILLS

Beatty happens to be a military spouse whose husband is a sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserve. Carmeuse employs many other veteran spouses, sons and daughters, and relatives of veterans. Carmeuse employs 150 veterans in the U.S., which represents about 9% of their workforce. "Carmeuse, as an employer, works hard to understand what military life is and was like for current and former servicemen and women. Through that understanding we can leverage and transfer their skills to our workplace," Prestwood added.

"Veterans are not always good at selling themselves," Prestwood explained. "Candidates frequently approach me at a job fair and say, 'I was infantry – I don't have any other skills.'" She believes that is where that extra level of probing and redirection comes into play. She often steers the conversation by saying, "I'm sure you have experience in leadership, or have faced difficult situations where you've overcome adversity or had to step up to a task." This tactic helps many veterans open up, and provides an opportunity to frame Carmeuse's values: a culture of safety, respect, and long-term employment.

Beatty acknowledged that many resumes cross her desk. Her advice for standing out? Use a clean format that tells a story. "As military roles overlap, things can get muddy. The clearer, the better. Leave out excess jargon. And craft each bullet as if you were presenting it to get a raise because of that accomplishment," she advised.

At job fairs, veterans should avoid saying things like, "I need a job as a mechanic." Instead, she advises telling recruiters what you can bring to the organization "Explain your background; tell them what you can do for them; and ask if there are any openings for your skill set," she said.

// JOB FAIR DO'S AND DON'T'S:

Don't: Say to a recruiter, "I don't really know what I want to do or what I could do at Carmeuse. I'm pretty open to anything."

Do: Be specific. Talk about what you have done successfully before.

Don't: Go to a career fair without having practiced talking about yourself.

Do: Be prepared. Recruitment and onboarding is costly these days. Companies want to be convinced of the candidate before making a hire; go the extra mile to show that company why they should choose you and how you would add value in their organization.

// MAKING STRIDES

Strunck is already successful in his new workplace. "He is asking intelligent questions and starting to put it together. He has a fresh perspective and is already thinking of process improvements that can be made," said Prestwood.

Strunck's manager, Andrew Fluder, said, "[Strunck] has been doing very well in his short time as the new energy buyer. He has quickly jumped into multiple projects, with a focus on improving current processes and assisting others in the organization. During a recent number of site visits in Virginia, [Strunck] quickly engaged with the operations and management teams, asked questions to better understand their challenges, and begin working towards developing a solution. Although we are just a few months in to him entering this new role, he's quickly working to establish himself as a contributor to the team."

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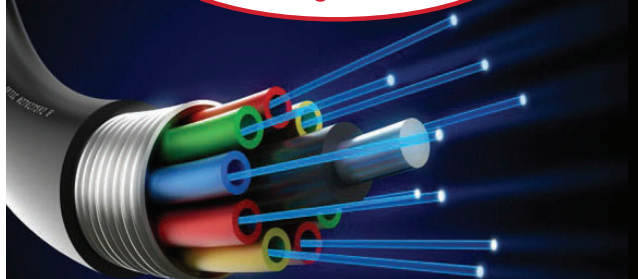
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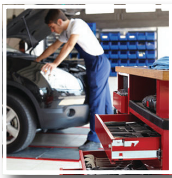
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Vizient	www.vizientinc.com/About-us/Careers

■ Ascension St. John Providence	www.stjohnprovidence.org/JobOpenings/
■ Aurora Health Care	www.aurorahealthcarecareers.org/
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■ Blue Star HonorCare	www.bluestarvets.us
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Allstate http://allstateveterans.com / Inside Back Cover	Mercer Transportation www.mercer-trans.com/ / 18
American Institutes for Research www.air.org/ / 34-35	Musicians Institute College of Contemporary Music www.mi.edu / 6
ASML www.asml.com / 41	My Computer Career www.mycomputercareer.edu / Back Cover
BMO Financial Group https://bmocareers.com/ / 23	NCTC www.nctcfiber.com / 46
California Lutheran University www.callutheran.edu / 31	North Carolina Department of Public Safety www.ncdps.gov / 37
Capital One www.capitalonebank.com / 19	NYSCAS, Touro College www.touro.edu / 39
Charles Schwab www.aboutschwab.com / 11	Quest Diagnostics www.questdiagnostics.com / 17
Chenega Corporation www.chenega.com/careers / 32	Republic Services www.republicservices.com/ / 48
Colonial Life www.coloniallife.com / 21	Savage Services www.savageservices.com / 30
Combined Insurance www.combinedinsurance.com / 30	Seagate www.seagate.com / 47
Comerica www.comerica.com / 15	Sears Holdings http://jobs.sears.com / 14
Cox Enterprises www.coxenterprises.com / 13	Securitas www.securitas.com / 23
Disabled American Veterans (DAV) www.dav.org / 26	Sierra Nevada Corporation www.sncorp.com/careers / 38
Eaton www.eaton.com/Eaton/index.htm / 27	Skanska www.usa.skanska.com/careers / 28
Ecolab www.ecolab.com / 15	Spectrum https://jobs.spectrum.com/ / 4
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University www.erau.edu/ / 18	State Farm www.statefarm.com / 41
Enbridge www.enbridge.com/ / 21	Stop&Shop https://stopandshop.com/ / 8-9
Entergy www.entergy.com / 15	TA Truck Service www.ta-petro.com/careers / 31
Epic Health Services www.epichealthservices.com / 13	Texas Instruments www.ti.com / 22
Farmers Insurance www.farmers.com/careers/ / 24-25	The GEO Group, Inc. www.jobs.geogroup.com / 17
First Command http://firstcommand.com/careers/ / 3, 45	Turner www.turnerconstruction.com / 22
Fresenius Medical Care https://jobs.fmcna.com/ / 5	U.S. Xpress www.usxpress.com / 40
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Henry M. Jackson Foundation http://careers.hjf.org/ / 10	Verizon www.verizon.com/militarynetwork / 7
Highmark Health www.highmark.com / 7	Vinnell Arabia www.vinnellarabia.com/ / 19
HMSHost www.hmshost.com / 47	Walgreens www.walgreens.com / 5
JDog www.jdogjunkremoval.com / 29	Wells Fargo www.wellsfargo.com/ / 47
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