



EQUAL OPPORTUNITYTM

THE CAREER MAGAZINE FOR MILITARY GRADUATES

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VETERANS ISSUE 2018

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50
YEARS

Navy Reservist

**OMARI
FAULKNER**

Guides Fellow
Vets to Civilian
Success at
ManTech

Spotlight on Veterans
Firms Vie for
Armed Forces Acumen

Vets Get Technical
At Sandia, G4S,
Tenneco & MLB

Control Your
Post-Military Destiny

An Inside Look
**At Communications
Careers**

Race to the Top
In Automotive

WBENC Honors
Top Corporations
Advancing WBEs

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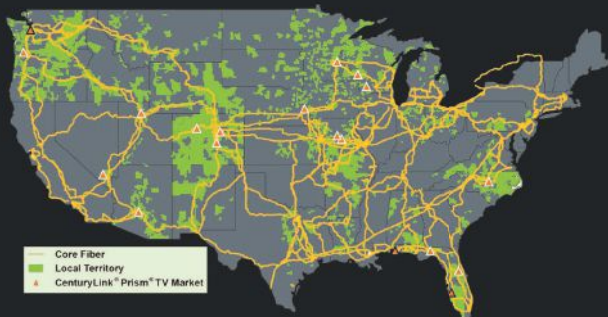
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THE CAREER MAGAZINE FOR MINORITY GRADUATES

VOLUME 51

ISSUE 4

VETERANS ISSUE 2018

INSIDE CONTENT

18

Vying for Veterans

Vets' acumen is highly prized by companies and federal agencies that want to leverage their skills in a global market. See how these featured veterans made the transition out of the military and into thriving new civilian careers at organizations that value their service and skills.

By Sandra H. Shichtman

30

Marketing Mavens

Careers in communications allow you to engage an audience while sharing key information about events, brands, products and the latest news. Meet five communications experts in various industries who give you an inside look at this competitive field for go-getters.

By Rachel Sokol

36

Race to the Top

There's no slowing down automotive professionals who steer their companies toward success and away from speed bumps. Read on to read their tips that will rev up your career.

By Anne Baye Ericksen

40

Vets Get Technical

Veterans and organizations in the private and public sectors show how tech talent and military expertise go hand in hand. Read about a few thriving vet techies and the companies who hired them for their technical know-how.

By Barbara Woodworth

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Editor's Note

6

Employers Vie for Vets' Skills

Career & Business 411

8

Study Finds Freelancers to Be Growing Workforce

Four Talent Recruiting Tips for Managers & Entrepreneurs

Resources for Veterans

10

Online Tools for Vets

Veterans Employment Toolkit

Honor Flight Takes Eligible Vets to DC

WWP Helps Veterans Find Employment with Partners

NMSN & USAA Connect Military Spouses with Careers

2018 Best Employers for Vets Revealed

Supplier & Entrepreneur News

14

Allstate Supports Equal Opportunity for Suppliers

WBE Tyndale Supports Competitive Advantage for All

WBENC Honors Top Corporations Advancing WBEs

Diversity Career Directory

46

ON THE COVER:

As ManTech International's employer of choice ambassador, Omari Faulkner guides veterans through their transition from military to civilian success using his international PR skills. Turn to page 18 to learn how his experience inspired him to join the U.S. Navy Reserves where he's a public affairs officer, and how his career is advancing in ManTech's culture of service.





We look
up to kids
and other
heroes.

At Boston Children's Hospital, heroes are everywhere you look. They're the children and families in our care — and every member of our team who, in their own way, contributes to sending them home well. Today, and every day, we honor our American veterans and welcome them to join us and our fight to give every child the future they deserve. bostonchildrens.org/careers EOE



Boston Children's Hospital
Until every child is well™

EDITOR'S NOTE



Employers Vie for Vets' Skills

More than ever before, employers are vying for the exact expertise that members of the military have in abundance. In fact, both private-sector companies and federal agencies actively seek the same traits that drew veterans into serving America because their tenacity, discipline and global perspective make them assets to their overall worldwide business strategies.

The demand for former servicemen and -women in corporate America, the federal government and the worldwide economy today is demonstrated by the fact that the veteran unemployment rate has been edging lower and lower.

For instance, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) recently reported that in July 2018 the veteran unemployment rate was 3%, which is the lowest July veteran unemployment rate since 2000. What's more, the non-veteran unemployment rate for July 2018 was 4%, while the national unemployment rate edged down to 3.9%, with 3.9 million new jobs having been added to the American economy since November 2016 and jobless claims remaining at a 48-year low as of mid-August.

In addition, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported earlier this year the jobless rate for all veterans declined from 4.3% to 3.7% in 2017.

To help veterans take advantage of this job market, there are ever-more resources that can make that transition to a second-act career following military service smooth and successful. We highlight those that you can use as a veteran in this issue. To leverage the Vets Employment Toolkit and other valuable resources to land your dream career, turn to page 10.

Then turn to page 18 to become inspired by the stories of the veterans we spotlight in this issue. Here we speak with veterans of the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, plus a Navy Reservist, who graces our cover.

That Navy Reservist is Omari Faulkner, ManTech International's employer of choice ambassador. In his role Faulkner guides veterans through their transition from military to civilian success using his international PR skills gained at the U. S. Department of State.

His time at ManTech, where more than 47% of the employees are veterans, inspired him to join the U.S. Navy Reserves, becoming a public affairs officer. "I sought to join in. I wanted to offer my international public relations skills and life experiences to support the active component of the Armed Forces," he says.

ManTech isn't the only employer vying for veterans' vast skills. Eric Eversole, president of Hiring Our Heroes and also vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, says American businesses have stepped up to the plate when it comes to hiring veterans, as evidenced, again, by the aforementioned ever-shrinking veteran unemployment rate. They include employers in the IT, aerospace, consulting and professional services, and the security industries.

In this issue we also identify opportunities in several other industries seeking the talents of young professionals, and share stories of those working in those industries.

On page 36 learn why there's no slowing down auto professionals and on page 40 to get an inside look at the competitive field of communications.

Plus, log onto EOP's website, eop.com/stemexpo, to register free for EOP's next STEM Diversity Career Expo on September 21 in New York, NY. Happy job hunting!

Barbara Capella Loehr
bloehr@eop.com

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A person with a prosthetic leg is jumping rope. They are wearing a dark t-shirt, light-colored shorts, and blue sneakers. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a wooden fence and a bright light source, possibly the sun, creating a warm glow.

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STUDY FINDS FREELANCERS TO BE GROWING WORKFORCE

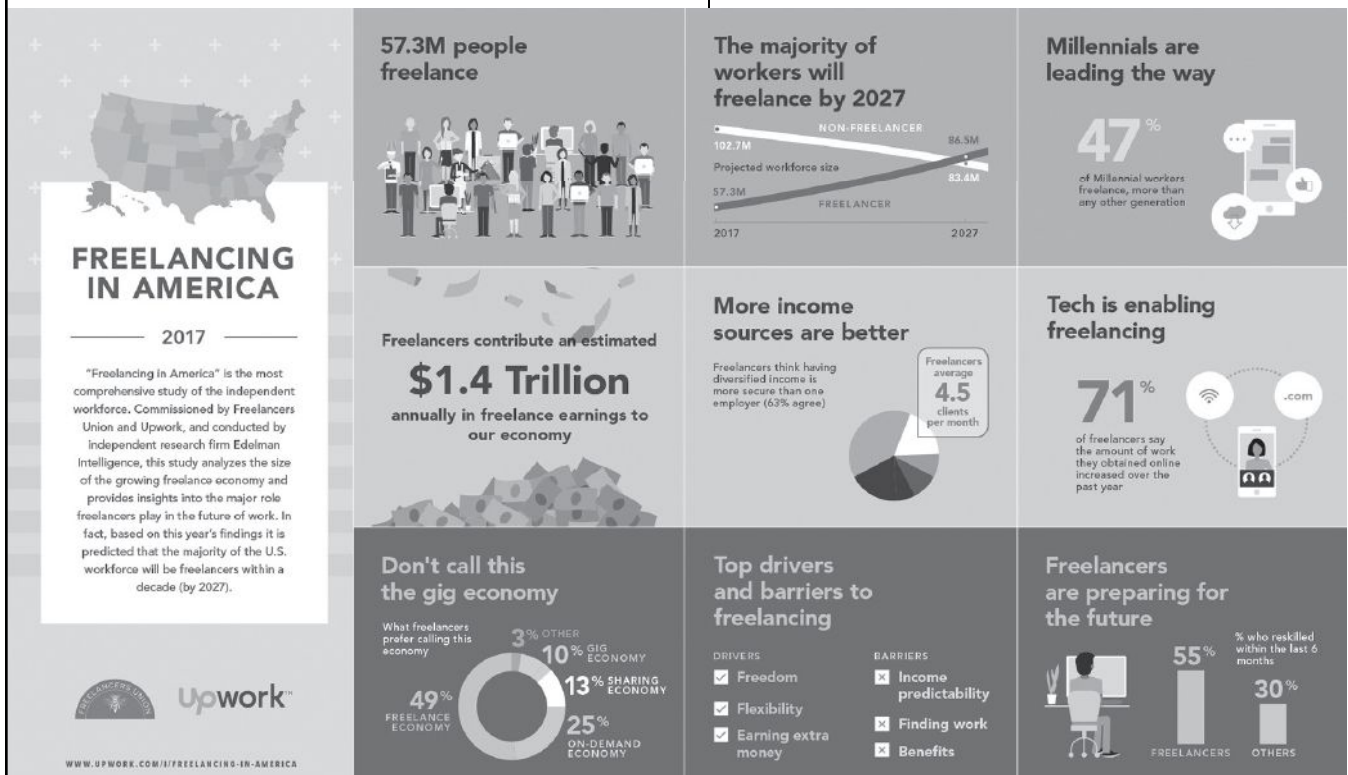
Freelancers are predicted to become the U.S. workforce majority within a decade, with nearly 50% of Millennial workers already freelancing, according to a recent study.

The annual *Freelancing in America (FIA): 2017* study by Upwork and Freelancers Union further found that freelance workforce growth is accelerating and has outpaced overall U.S. workforce growth by thrice since 2014.

Work is changing rapidly, the *FIA* study has found, due to the impacts of automation, and freelancers are better equipped for the future due to more frequent reskilling.

not very confident that work they do will exist in 20 years. Reskilling is therefore critical. A 55% portion of freelancers participated in skill-related education in the last six months versus only 30% of non-freelancers.

- 2. The Majority of the U.S. Workforce Will Soon Freelance:** At its current growth rate, we will reach this milestone by 2027.
- 3. People Are Increasingly Freelancing by Choice:** Asked whether they started freelancing more by choice or necessity, 63% of freelancers say by choice - up 10 points (from 53%) since 2014.
- 4. Stability Is Being Redefined:** Freelancers increasingly think that having a diversified portfolio of clients is more secure than one employer (63% agree, up 10 points since 2016) and have an average of 4.5 clients per month.



Freelancers are predicted to become the U.S. workforce majority within a decade, according to a recent study.

The fourth annual *FIA* study - which comprehensively measures the U.S. independent workforce - estimates that 57.3 million Americans are freelancing (36% of the U.S. workforce), contributing approximately \$1.4 trillion annually to the economy, an increase of almost 30% since the previous year.

Notable study findings reveal:

- 1. Freelancers Are Better Prepared for the Future:** As work changes, 54% of the U.S. workforce says they're

- 5. While Finances Are a Challenge for All, Freelancers Experience a Unique Concern - Income Predictability:** The study found that, with the ebbs and flows of freelancing, full-time freelancers dip into savings more often (63% at least once per month versus 20% of full-time non-freelancers).

"We are in the Fourth Industrial Revolution - a period of rapid change in work driven by increasing automation - but we have a

unique opportunity to guide the future of work, and freelancers will play more of a key role than people realize," says Stephane Kasriel, CEO of Mountain View, CA-headquartered Upwork, a freelancing website with offices also in San Francisco, CA, Chicago, IL and Oslo, Norway.

Kasriel is also co-chair of the World Economic Forum's Council on the Future of Gender, Education and Work.

"Professionals who choose to freelance make this choice knowing that, as their own boss, they are in control of their destiny. Freelancers, therefore, think more proactively about market trends and refresh their skills more often than traditional employees, helping advance our economy," Kasriel adds.

"The workforce is experiencing changes as never before, with economic transformation driven by new technologies and automation," adds Sara Horowitz, founder and executive director of Brooklyn, NY-based Freelancers Union, a labor organization that represents the independent workforce with more than 360,000 members nationwide.

"We must be prepared to face the challenges of the future, and build the organizations that will support the 21st century workforce. At Freelancers Union we're committed to building a fair ecosystem that enables people to learn new skills, be protected and feel connected to one another," Horowitz adds.

Full study results are available at upwork.com/i/freelancing-in-america/2017 and slideshare.net/upwork/freelancing-in-america-2017/1.

FOUR TALENT RECRUITING TIPS FOR MANAGERS & ENTREPRENEURS

When you operate a small business or manage a team, every team member matters greatly, and an open position can drastically impact your production. And as a manager, entrepreneur or small business owner, you're beyond busy - and that isn't likely to change.

One moment, you're serving as a salesperson, trying to close that new piece of business. The next, you're playing service rep and solving a buyer's problem or doing executive tasks like running to the bank to sign loan documents. Add to these roles more selling, more service and more managing.

Suddenly, your best employee gives notice. So, as busy as you are, how will you find time to recruit, interview, hire and train a replacement - especially when there's stiff competition for quality employees?

The internet leveled the playing field, and now your company and all others - big and small - are able to reach top talent. However, this is straining an already tapped-out talent pool, and has left many small business owners, entrepreneurs and managers searching far and wide for talented and resourceful job candidates.

It's critical to find and have smart, resourceful talent capable of keeping up with the fast-paced dynamics that come along with a small company.

Luckily, fitting hiring into your already busy day isn't that complicated - it just requires a few easy adjustments."

Follow these four steps to find superior job candidates more quickly and easily, and to make hiring more efficient than ever:

1. Leverage the Most Productive Streams of Talent.

Asking for referrals and networking with other business people has long been a highly effective way to locate talent.

In fact, business owners who carve out time each week for networking and referral generation discover a secret: the labor pool isn't as tapped out as they originally thought. They simply weren't taking a disciplined approach to recruiting.

2. Actively Share the Talent You Discover with Other Business Owners. Keep in mind that you're not going to be able to hire every great candidate you meet. Sometimes talented candidates just aren't the right fit for your company, and other times, all of your positions are filled. When this happens, be sure to share candidates with other business owners to help them solve their own hiring challenges; they'll also be happy to reciprocate.

Business owners who share talent in this manner with at least eight or more businesses report greater success in hiring faster and making better hires.

3. Conduct Hands-On Interviews. The standard approach to hiring is to conduct interviews where candidates talk about work. Not only is this a huge drain on time, it's also an inaccurate way to assess whether a candidate fits your job. That's why many have turned to doing hands-on interviews, in which they experience the candidate doing sample work.

For example, if it's for a sales role, then the candidate joins you on a sales call. If you're hiring for a customer service role, then the candidate can help solve a customer's problem.

By watching the candidate in action, you save time while also making a more accurate assessment of whether or not someone is a good fit."

4. Line Up Key People before You Need Them. Some roles are more vital than others, and when these roles are left unfilled, they can harm your business. Plus, the extra work usually falls on your already overflowing plate.

Instead of waiting to start recruiting until an employee in an essential job quits or gives notice, do yourself a favor and recruit ahead of time. Dedicating 30 minutes to recruiting each week pays off by creating a pipeline of potential talent ready to be hired the moment that vital job becomes open.

Hiring cycles don't always happen at the best time, but when they do, you must dive right in and locate talent that will keep your company thriving. If you've maintained viable contacts via networking and referral generation, then you'll be able to locate and hire exceptional talent faster than you might expect - even in an over-tapped labor pool. Then you can get back to your regular tasks and help your company stay strong.

— Scott Wintrip

About the Author: *Hiring expert Wintrip is the author of High Velocity Hiring: How to Hire Top Talent in an Instant. He's also built the St. Petersburg, FL-based Wintrip Consulting Group, wintripconsultinggroup.com, a global consultancy, over the past 18 years. For five consecutive years, Staffing Industry Analysts, a Crain Communications company, has awarded Scott a place on the Staffing 100, a list of the world's 100 most influential staffing leaders. He's also a member of the Million Dollar Consultant Hall of Fame and was recently inducted into the Staffing 100 Hall of Fame.*

RESOURCES**FOR**VETS

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR VETS

Veterans seeking to transition from military to civilian careers can find a wealth of information and help online.

Those resources include the following:

Veterans.Gov

veterans.gov

Supported by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Offers employment resources for veterans.

Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS)

dol.gov/vets

Supported by DOL.

Prepares America's veterans, service members and their spouses for careers, provides them with employment resources and expertise, protects their employment rights and promotes their employment opportunities.

DOL, CareerOneStop

careeronestop.org/Veterans/default.aspx

Sponsored by DOL and partner of the American Job Center Network.

Helps veterans explore career options, locate training and find jobs.

My Next Move for Veterans

mynextmove.org/vets

*Sponsored by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and DOL, and developed by the National Center for O*NET Development.*

Offers interactive tool to help vets learn about career options.

The Gold Card Initiative

dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html

Joint effort of the ETA and VETS.

Provides unemployed post-9/11-era veterans with the follow-up services they need to succeed in today's job market.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

va.gov

Run by the U.S. government.

Offers myriad resources and essential information for veterans.

Veterans Employment Center (VEC)

vets.gov/employment

Supported by VA.

Connects veterans and their families with employment and career-development opportunities.

USAJOBS

usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/veterans

Run by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Helps recruit, retain and honor a world-class government workforce for the American people and offers different hiring paths.

Feds Hire Vets

fedshirevets.gov

Operated by OPM.

Serves as OPM's government-wide veterans employment website, and is a critical component of the federal government's strategy for the recruitment and employment of veterans.

Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), Warriors to Work

[woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/](http://woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/warriors-to-work)

warriors-to-work

Veteran employment program run by WWP, which was founded in 2003 as a non-profit organization to help post-9/11 wounded warriors.

Provides career guidance and support services to wounded warriors, their families and caregivers interested in transitioning to the civilian workforce.

ApprenticeshipUSA

doleta.gov/OA/veterans.cfm

Supported by DOL.

Provides details to veterans about registered apprenticeship.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT TOOLKIT

The Veterans Employment Toolkit, **va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/index.asp**, was created by the National Center for PTSD, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Mental Health Services.



The primary development team consisted of a group of psychologists at the Dissemination and Training Division of the National Center for PTSD. The team worked with several other individuals and agencies to create a useful resource for employers, managers and supervisors, HR professionals, Employment Assistance Program (EAP) providers and veterans.

It provides myriad resources for veterans, reservists and their families, and employers

seeking to hire them: **va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/docs/em_fullversionResources.asp** and **va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/veteranresources.asp**.

Toolkit resources include the following information; log onto va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/index.asp to access the associated websites:

- **Department of Veterans Affairs:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides patient care and federal benefits to veterans and their dependents, and can help with vocational rehabilitation and employment.
- **National Center for PTSD:** The VA's National Center for PTSD conducts research and education on trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL):** The DOL has a number of resources available for employers, such as

Resources for Employers, Veteran' Employment and Training Services (VETS), Work Opportunity Tax Credit Information, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Compliance Assistance - Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and a Toolkit for Federal Agencies on Implementing Executive Order 13548.

- **America's Heroes at Work:** This program is designed for employers and the workforce development system to help returning service members and veterans living with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and/or PTSD succeed in the workplace - particularly service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.
- **Feds Hire Vets:** This is the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) government-wide veterans employment website. On November 9, 2009, then-President Barack Obama signed Executive Order 13518, Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government, which establishes the Veterans Employment Initiative, detailed on this website.
- **Federal Occupational Health's (FOH) Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** FOH is a non-appropriated agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that provides occupational health and wellness services exclusively to federal employees. Assistance is offered seven days a week, 24 hours a day at 800-222-0364 or 888-262-7848 (TTY).
- **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR):** The ESGR operates programs directed toward U.S. employers, employees and communities to ensure understanding of the role of Reserve and National Guard members. It also offers employer resources and a Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) resource page.
- **Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM):** As one of its many resources, SHRM offers details about military employment, including a military employment resource page.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Home Page:** The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities.
- **Job Accommodation Network (JAN):** The JAN is the leading source of free, expert and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.
- **Understanding Your Employment Rights Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A Guide for Veterans:** This U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guide briefly explains how protections for veterans with service-connected disabilities differ under USERRA and ADA.
- **Project HIRED Wounded Warrior Workforce Program:** Project HIRED supports veterans with disabilities with career services, retraining and wrap-around support services.
- **USERRA Advanced e-Learning Course:** USERRA is the federal law that establishes rights and responsibilities for members of the Reserve and National Guard, and their civilian employers.
- **Hero Health Hire:** This offers a place where business leaders, government officials and citizens can learn, share

information and commit to helping the nation's wounded warriors find and retain meaningful employment.

- **Northrop Grumman, Operation IMPACT (Injured Military Pursing Assisted Career Transition):** Operation IMPACT assists severely injured service members with the transition to civilian careers.
- **Hire Veterans:** This allows employers to advertise job postings to veterans, and allows veterans to post their resumes for search by employers.
- **VetJobs:** This allows employers to advertise job postings to veterans, and allows veterans to post their resumes for search by employers. It also offers a number of resources for veterans and employers.
- **VetNet:** This is a technology-based platform positioned to assist veterans, transitioning service members and their spouses, find and prepare for meaningful post-service careers. VetNet is a dynamic and interactive platform, where each week live content is delivered and focused across three tracks of workforce preparation and training. These tracks include basic training, career connections and entrepreneur.
- **Troops to Teachers:** This is a U.S. Department of Education and DOD program that helps eligible military personnel begin new careers as teachers in public schools.
- **Helmets to Hardhats:** This connects veterans to promising careers in construction.
- **Veterans Green Jobs:** This helps veterans transition into their communities and find career opportunities across all environmental sustainability sectors of the economy. It offers training and experience, directly employs veterans and provides entrepreneurial opportunities.
- **Veterans in Piping (VIP) Program:** The United Association of Plumbers, Pipefitters and Sprinklerfitters' (UA) program provides returning veterans with 16 weeks of accelerated welding training.
- **Wall Street Warfighters Foundation:** The program prepares veterans with disabilities for careers in the financial services industry.
- **Real Warriors:** This provides a descriptive list of Tips for Finding a Job and Achieving Success in the Civilian Workplace.
- **VA:** It offers a number of resources for helping veterans obtain and excel in employment both within and outside VA. These resources include Veteran Employment Services Office (VESO), Compensated Work Therapy and Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service (VR&E).
- **American Corporate Partners (ACP):** This is a nationwide mentoring program dedicated to helping recently returned veterans transition to the civilian workforce via mentoring, career counseling and networking.
- **Combat to Corporate:** It's a website developed by a veteran that helps explain how to apply your military training to excel in the business world.
- **DOL's My Next Move:** It's a website that helps you find out more about different types of careers.
- **Call of Duty Endowment:** This is a non-profit public benefit corporation that helps military personnel transition to civilian careers.
- **Student Veterans of America:** This is a coalition of student veterans groups on college campuses across the U.S.

RESOURCES**FOR**VETS

HONOR FLIGHT TAKES ELIGIBLE VETS TO DC

Honor Flight Long Island (HFLI), honorflightlongisland.org, is a local, non-profit chapter of the national Honor Flight Network, honorflight.org, whose mission is to transport America's veterans to Washington, DC to visit those memorials dedicated to honor the service and sacrifices of themselves and their friends.

HFLI organizes, hosts and pays for the biannual flights, which depart from Islip MacArthur Airport. As part of the day's events, veterans and their guardians - volunteers who make the trips possible - fly to Baltimore-Washington International Airport, where a motor coach takes them on a 50-minute drive to DC, and to the WWII, Korean and Vietnam memorials, to Arlington National Cemetery, and then on to U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy and other memorials.

HFLI President Bill Jones recently told the 50 veterans who made the last DC trip in May that "your country said that it needed you, and you said, 'Yes, I will go.'"

Jones said his group flies our local heroes to visit and reflect together at our national memorials: "Long Islanders who have a loved one interested in taking an Honor Flight, should contact us, and we'll make all the required arrangements."



HFLI President Bill Jones is a veteran and a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

He added they're now lining up 2019 trips for eligible Vietnam veterans. Each HFLI trip includes 50 veterans who go for free, thanks to donations. They're accompanied by 50 guardians, next generation, able-bodied volunteers who donate \$400 (tax deductible) to offset the day's travel expenditures. If there's no family member to act as a guardian, then HFLI has a roster of volunteers ready to step up for the privilege and donate the required fee. The trips are offered to veterans who haven't yet visited these memorials in the nation's capital.

More information can be found at the previously noted website, or by calling Virginia Bennett at 631-702-2423 or emailing her at vbennett@southamptontownny.gov.

WWP HELPS VETERANS FIND EMPLOYMENT WITH PARTNERS

Jacksonville, FL-based Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) has recently partnered with JEA to connect wounded veterans with new career opportunities.

Also based in Jacksonville, JEA is Northeast Florida's non-profit, community-owned utility that serves an estimated 458,000 electric, 341,000 water and 264,000 sewer customers.

JEA already has a talent pool that includes veteran backgrounds for 20% of its workforce, according to WWP. The Jacksonville utility provider looked to expand that veteran employment base by meeting with nearly 20 warriors at WWP headquarters. JEA's apprenticeship program can lead warriors to new careers.

"I think it's a great thing they have these apprenticeship programs, not just for veterans, but for everybody to seek a career," says Mike Couey, a veteran of the U.S. Army and a WWP supporter. Couey recently attended the gathering with his son, who's also an Army veteran.

"It's always good to see companies out there that are actually supporting our veterans and providing them with opportunities," his son, Dalton Couey, adds.

Hiring veterans in the civilian workforce gives organizations coachable team players with specialized skill sets that are an asset to any team. WWP career counseling services are free of charge for warriors and employers.

"They have more than just electric. It's water, it's forestry, it's biology - it's more than just one opportunity," points out Princess Salley, a veteran of the U.S. Navy and a JEA representative who discussed the opportunities that extend beyond what you might consider for a utility company.

Salley further notes how she learned a lot from JEA, including when to look for new jobs with the company. "They post positions every Friday, so I will be looking for opportunities."

Fellow Navy veteran Deja Grissom shares, too, how she was interested in a chance at a new career. She says she was seeking "just something different," and appreciates the help WWP has provided.

"Resume help, interview help, I get emails every week about activities and things to build people up because it can be kind of lonely when you are getting out; it's a hard transition time," says Grissom.

For Dalton Couey, he's ready for the help from WWP: "I'm looking forward to working with them to improve my resume and any other ways I can stand out to employers."

For more information about WWP and its programs, log onto woundedwarriorproject.org.



RESOURCES **FOR VETS**

MILITARY SPOUSES CONNECT WITH CAREERS

The National Military Spouse Network (NMSN), a Lorton, VA-based organization supporting the professional and personal growth of the nation's military spouses, has recently hosted its first-ever NMSN Rocky Mountain Summit presented by USAA in Colorado Springs, CO this past June.

It featured nationally recognized speakers, including Vessence Corporation CEO Nancy Belmont, and employment specialist and author Janet Farley.

An expansion of the organization's career-building national conferences for military spouses in all stages of service, this was the first of two career summits this year. The two-day programs focus on a wide range of topics important to military spouses, from active duty to civilian life.

The next NMSN career conference, the Capital Summit presented by USAA, is set for October 12 to 13 in Springfield, VA. More information can be found at milspousesummit.com, and more details about NMSN is at nationalmilitaryspousenetwork.org.

2018 BEST EMPLOYERS FOR VETS REVEALED

The Best for Vets: Employers List for 2018 features 100 organizations across more than 30 industries.

Employers were evaluated according to their culture, policies for military-connected employees and resources they devote to hiring veterans. Only organizations that did well in this evaluation made the list.

See the accompanying table for the top 10 companies, and go to charts.militarytimes.com/chart/5 for the full list.

TOP 10 BEST EMPLOYERS FOR VETERANS FOR 2018

Rank	Company	Percent of Veteran Employees	New Hires
1.	First Data Corp.	7%	2,632
2.	BAE Systems	16%	5,428
3.	Comcast NBCUniversal	5%	31,706
4.	PwC	10%	376
5.	General Motors (GM)	6%	8,426
6.	Verizon	8%	12,247
7.	Southern Company	8%	1,442
8.	Booz Allen Hamilton	28%	6,000
9.	Newport News Shipbuilding	18%	2,499
10.	U.S. Bank	3%	15,996

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Division site: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/wtd>



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division

SUPPLIER & ENTREPRENEUR NEWS

ALLSTATE SUPPORTS EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR SUPPLIERS

Established in 2003, Allstate Insurance Company's supplier diversity program has steadily increased the procurement of goods and services with diverse suppliers. In 2016 Allstate spent more than \$448 million with these diverse businesses.

The Northbrook, IL-headquartered company - which offers financial products including college savings programs, retirement planning, and a range of life insurance products including term life and whole life - is committed to increasing its spend with diverse suppliers. It encourages prospective diverse suppliers to create a supplier profile in its My Supplier Network.



Allstate Insurance Company's supplier diversity program has steadily increased the procurement of goods and services with diverse suppliers.



The Allstate Supplier Mentoring Program is designed to help diverse business owners strengthen their companies. The 13-month program involves a series of live sessions and webinars focused on leadership and employee development, financial management, sales and marketing, and technology improvement sessions. While there's no cost to participate in the program itself, participants are responsible for their own travel arrangements to Northbrook, IL when necessary.

To apply for the 2018 Allstate Mentoring Program for Diverse Suppliers, please contact AllstateMentoringProgram@Allstate.com to express your interest in participating.

In addition, the company hosts the Allstate supplier diversity

exchange. Each year, Allstate hosts this annual exchange for diverse suppliers. Attendees have the chance to pitch their businesses to a panel of Allstate decision-makers in charge of sourcing goods and services, as well as attend workshops and networking opportunities with Allstate leaders.

The Allstate supplier diversity exchange was launched in 2008 to provide an opportunity for minority-, woman-, veteran-, LGBT- and disability-owned businesses to build relationships with Allstate and prime suppliers. This forum offers guidance and insight into the sourcing process for large organizations.

While attendance at this event does not guarantee business, 135 participating companies have had the chance to compete for Allstate's business, with more than 80 successfully winning contracts.

Dates for the 2018 Supplier Diversity Exchange have not been selected, at presstime. For more information send inquiries to SDexchange@allstate.com.

Furthermore, diversity sourcing at Allstate involves SPS commodity managers identifying all qualified suppliers, including minority-, female-, veteran-, LGBT- and disability-owned businesses, in the competitive bidding process when possible. All prospective suppliers must complete a supplier profile in Allstate's My Supplier Network.

Allstate recognizes companies with at least 51% ownership by members of minority, woman, veteran, people with disabilities or LGBT communities as diverse suppliers. Minority companies include:

- African American.
- Hispanic American.
- Native American.
- Asian and Pacific Islander American (Asian Indian Included).

To be eligible for Allstate's supplier diversity program, a company must provide certification by one of the following methods:

- Washington, DC-based National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)
- Washington, DC-based U.S. Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce Education Foundation (USPAACC)
- Washington, DC-based Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).
- Washington, DC-based U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Center for Verification and Enterprise Vendor Information Pages (VIP)
- New York, NY-based National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)
- Carnegie, PA-based National Veteran Owned Business Association (NaVOBA)

Allstate accepts certification from local, state or federal government agencies. It also accepts self-certification via its supplier registration portal on its website.

According to Allstate, to ensure your certifications are current and uploaded to your supplier profile. If you have additional questions about certification, please visit the supplier registration portal at allstate.mysuppliernetwork.com.

WBE TYNDALE SUPPORTS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR ALL

As a certified Woman-Owned Business, Tyndale shares a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness that guides the way it works and does business. The Pipersville, PA-based company provides arc-rated flame resistant (FR) clothing in managed apparel programs driven by more than 30 years of FR experience.

In 2007 majority ownership of Tyndale transferred from Tyndale's founder, Dale Whittenberger, to Gail Whittenberger. It was then that Tyndale became a certified Woman-Owned Business Enterprise under the California Public Utilities Commission.

Tyndale has also been certified by the Washington, DC-based Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) - the largest third-party certifier of businesses owned, controlled and operated by women in the U.S. - since 2011.

Proud of its continued status as a WBE, Tyndale believes in the competitive advantage that results from the energy and value each



Gail Whittenberger is CEO of Tyndale.

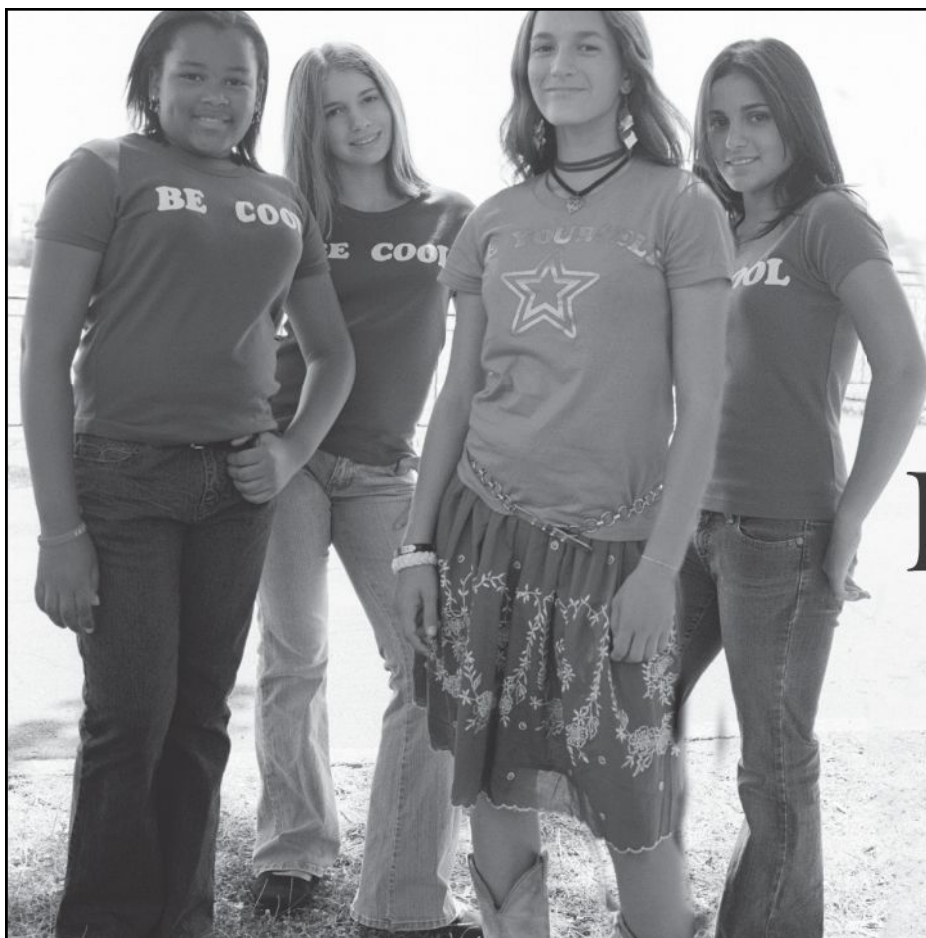
person brings to the workplace. It continues to create an inclusive and diverse environment by learning from the best, building the skills to succeed, and rewarding results.

Tyndale's policy is to attain the maximum practicable spending levels with diversity suppliers. Its sourcing and procurement process enables qualified suppliers to compete for Tyndale's business opportunities.

The following are guidelines to help position

your company for favorable consideration:

- Competitive and value-added capabilities.
- Proven track record and references.
- Financial stability.
- Quality processes (i.e. ISO 9000, TL 9000, or equivalent).
- Understanding of Tyndale's businesses.



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Lead it.



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www.girlscouts.org

SUPPLIER & ENTREPRENEUR NEWS

- Core competencies that match Tyndale's business needs.
- Responsiveness to request for proposals (RFPs).
- Technological capabilities.
- Third-party diversity certification, if registering as a Minority, Woman, or Service-Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise.

Tyndale reserves the right to select suppliers who will participate in its procurement process. Tyndale cannot and will not promise to transact business with all suppliers. For more information log onto tyndaleusa.com/about-us/supplier-diversity.

WBENC HONORS TOP CORPORATIONS ADVANCING WBEs

Earlier this year the Washington, DC-based Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) recognized 66 corporations with the America's Top Corporations for Women's Business Enterprises (WBEs) award.

The Top Corporations awards were bestowed during the 2018 WBENC Summit & Salute, a gathering of more than 1,500 entrepreneurs and business leaders, in March in Dallas, TX. The event showcased senior executives discussing their industries, anticipated changes and innovations in their supply chain, and the impact these will have on the WBEs who do business with them.

WBENC honors these Top Corporations that have implemented policies and programs to enable growth and innovation, while creating a level playing field for woman-owned businesses.

WBENC applauds the 2017 honorees for successfully driving the sustainable inclusion of woman-owned businesses within their supply chains, providing equal access to business opportunities, and



continuing to positively impact our nation and communities by fueling economic growth and job creation.

To underscore that achievement, the 2017 Top Corporations collectively spent more than \$39.3 billion on WBENC-certified WBE suppliers in 2016, an increase of \$3.6 billion from the prior year.

Helping to drive those results is a dedication and commitment to diverse suppliers - all 66 Top Corporations have a formal, written policy to support their supplier diversity programs, and 95% have an annual diversity spend goal.

To learn more about the WBENC Summit & Salute and America's Top Corporations for WBEs, visit summit.wbenc.org. The next summit is set for March 11 to 13, 2019 in Houston, TX.

See the accompanying table for the current compilation of Top Corporations, listed in alphabetical order.




Top row: Sharon Olzerowicz, Hired by Matrix; Livia Whisenhunt, PS Energy Group Inc; Terry Lehmann, True Green Enterprises, Inc.; Laurie Halloran, Halloran Consulting Group; Caren Schweitzer, Creative Resources Agency; Ronda Jackson, Décor Interior Design, Inc.; Jayshree Moorthy, Frontier Technologies, Inc. Bottom row: Lynn Perenic, Argent Tape and Label; Claudia Mirza, Akorbi; Pamela Kan, Bishop-Wisecarver; Jill Frey, Cummins Facility Services; V. Janet Brewster, Brewster Procurement Group, Inc.; Regina Mellinger, Primary Services; Lois Gamerman Soft Stuff Distributors, Inc. (not photographed)

2017 America's Top Corporations for WBEs

Accenture, LLP	DTE Energy Company	Kelly Services, Inc.	Pfizer Inc.
Adient	DuPont	KPMG LLP	Procter & Gamble
Allstate Insurance Company	Entergy Services	The Kroger Co.	Raytheon
Apple	Ericsson	Macy's, Inc.	Robert Half
AT&T	Exxon Mobil Corporation	ManpowerGroup	Shell Oil Company
Avis Budget Group, Inc.	EY	Marriott International, Inc.	Sodexo
Bank of America	FedEx	Medtronic	Target Corporation
BMO Harris Bank	Fiat Chrysler Automobiles	Merck & Co., Inc.	TIAA
BP America, Inc.	Fifth Third Bancorp	MetLife	Toyota
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company	Ford Motor Company	MGM Resorts International	United Airlines
Capital One	General Motors	Microsoft Corporation	UPS
Chevron	IBM	Monsanto Company	Verizon
The Coca-Cola Company	Intel Corporation	Nationwide	Vistra Energy
CVS Health	Johnson & Johnson	New York Life	Walmart Stores, Inc.
Dell Technologies	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	Nissan North America, Inc.	The Walt Disney Company
Delta Air Lines, Inc.	Kaiser Permanente	Pacific Gas and Electric Co.	Wells Fargo & Company
	Kellogg Company	PepsiCo, Inc.	

Note: Companies are listed in alphabetical order.




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DISCOVER

Vying for Veterans

VETS' ACUMEN IS HIGHLY PRIZED AND HEAVILY SOUGHT BY COMPANIES AND FEDERAL AGENCIES THAT WANT TO LEVERAGE THEIR SKILLS IN A GLOBAL MARKET.

Companies - regional, national, and global - in a great number of industries are vying to hire veterans. They include companies in the energy, banking, IT, telecommunications and transportation industries.

Federal agencies also actively seek the talent of former soldiers whose insight is invaluable to their overall missions.

Hiring managers appreciate the skill sets veterans mastered while in the military and can bring to the civilian workplace.

See how the veterans profiled in this feature made the transition out of the military and into new civilian careers at organizations that value their service and skills.

FAULKNER'S CAREER ADVANCES IN MANTECH INTERNATIONAL'S CULTURE OF SERVICE

O mari Faulkner completed a three-month internship at ManTech International, a company that provides advance technical services to the U.S. government in areas that include defense, intelligence and law enforcement. "I had no knowledge of government contracting at the time, and ManTech provided me with an opportunity to learn from experienced professionals," he remembers.

Following that internship, he went on to serve a two-year assignment with the Washington, DC-headquartered U.S. Department of State (DOS), where he was assigned to the U.S. Consulate in Mumbai, India, and gained valuable international public relations skills.

"Once I entered the job market after leaving the Department of State, ManTech was the only company I wanted to work for," he shares.

Faulkner was hired into ManTech as a business development manager, where his focus was on the company's federal civilian portfolio. ManTech provided hands-on training and mentors to assist him when he had questions. That allowed him, he says, to "jump right in and learn on the go."

BY SANDRA H. SHICHTMAN



ManTech
International Corporation

O mari Faulkner is employer of choice ambassador at ManTech International, where he helps veterans transition from military to civilian careers. He's also a member of the U.S. Navy Reserves, where he's a public affairs officer.

2250 Corporate



-----MISSION: MANTECH-----

Founded in 1968, ManTech International is a multibillion-dollar public company that provides the innovation, adaptability and critical thinking the U.S. government needs for success in defense, intelligence, law enforcement, science, administration, health and other fields, throughout the nation and in many countries around the world. It now applies the lessons learned in the unforgiving arena of national security to help the private sector protect networks and critical information.

----- **mantech.com** -----

Today he serves as ManTech's employer of choice ambassador. "I'm responsible for developing the strategy and implementing policies that improve upon ManTech's reputation as one of the best places to work in the government services industry. One of my most treasured responsibilities is helping women and men during their transition from active duty to a civilian career," Faulkner details.

He also says that the fact that more than 47% of ManTech's employees are veterans inspired him. "I sought to join in. I wanted to offer my international public relations skills and life experiences to support the active component of the Armed Forces."

Three years after coming on board at ManTech, Faulkner joined the U.S. Navy Reserves, where he's a public affairs officer. He admits his military background has increased his respect for "the culture of service."

That fits perfectly with the culture at Herndon, VA-headquartered ManTech, where "we're firmly grounded to support our nation in times of war and peace," he points out.

The company is "mission-focused," and Faulkner's Navy experience is respected and matches the company culture and vision. "We work together toward a common goal; we're a family."

He has some advice for members of the military: "Begin the transition process 12 to 18 months in advance, if at all possible. This allows you time to research companies, attend career conferences and most importantly begin to reach out to people within your network to let them know of your transition plans, what your goals are, and what types of jobs interest you. Lastly, a key element is finding an organization that fits your culture and values veterans, and the leadership tools and experience we bring to the table."

ManTech has a support group for each branch of the service, the Reserves and the National Guard. The groups provide advice and recommendations to ManTech's military and veterans team, and strategic recruiting and mentorship services to fellow ManTech employees.

The company also participates in hundreds of job fairs every year, and is actively engaged with transition assistance programs on military bases throughout the country and internationally.

Information about the company and its open positions can be found at mantech.com/careers/Pages/careers.aspx.

Veterans can also email the company at military@mantech.com. Connect on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and Glassdoor.

T-MOBILE'S BUCKINGHAM IS PASSIONATE ABOUT HIS CIVILIAN CAREER

James Buckingham, who served four years in the U.S. Air Force (USAF), first joined T-Mobile on the recommendation of a family member. He became - and still is - passionate about the Bellevue, WA-based company because of the opportunities for career growth it offers and its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

"Not only does T-Mobile offer six diversity and inclusion networks, including one focused on veteran support, but the company also has some of the best programs for recruiting and helping support veterans transition back into the civilian workplace," he explains.

In recent years, Buckingham adds, T-Mobile has increased its support of veterans by partnering with organizations that focus on veterans' employment, such as Four-Block, Recruit Military and Hire our Heroes.

Buckingham says that, after transitioning out of the Air Force, he spent several years working in the federal government and at San Ramon, CA-headquartered Chevron Corporation before coming to T-Mobile, a telecommunications company offering wireless services to consumers and businesses.

His first position at T-Mobile was as a customer care representative. He's since moved up to his current position as a team of experts coach at one of T-Mobile's call centers.



James Buckingham is a team of experts coach at T-Mobile's Nashville, TN call center, after serving four years in the U.S. Air Force (USAF).

As a coach, he says, my "goal is to motivate and inspire my frontline team to achieve and exceed performance results. I'm responsible for leading by example, and demonstrating skills my team should practice (many of which I learned coming from the military). I assist my team in handling calls, and focus on their personal career development."

Buckingham is also a chapter leader for T-Mobile's Veterans and Allies Network (VAN) in the Nashville, TN facility, where he works.

"I help coordinate and relay information on VAN volunteer events and support groups my home team can be involved in," he explains.

Buckingham says his career at T-Mobile has been impacted by his former team manager who, when Buckingham first joined the company, noticed his potential as a future leader and invited him to be part of what was then a pilot program - Team of Experts - at the Nashville call center.

The Benefits of Hiring Transitioning Soldiers

There are more than 100,000 soldiers who transition from the U.S. Army each year. And according to the Army's Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP) on Twitter @SFLTAP, hiring transitioning soldiers is good for business.

Here are some statistics SFL-TAP tweeted in an infographic that backs this up:

- **9 in 10** veterans consider themselves to be ambitious.
- **78%** of soldiers surveyed were rated proficient in leading employees compared to 62% of civilian industry leaders.
- **57%** of transitioning soldiers seeking employment found a job before leaving Army active-duty service.
- **83%** of veterans list career development opportunities as a very important aspect of employment.

To learn more about SFL-TAP, which helps prepare transitioning soldiers for civilian careers, entrepreneurial and technical opportunities, as well as with applying to higher-education programs, visit www.sfl-tap.army.mil.

MISSION: T-MOBILE

T-Mobile US, Inc.'s nationwide 4G LTE network delivers wireless experiences to 74 million customers. The telecommunications company provides services via its subsidiaries and operates its flagship brands, T-Mobile and MetroPCS. The company just recently inked a multiyear, \$3.5 billion deal with Espoo, Finland-based Nokia. The agreement will provide end-to-end 5G solutions for T-Mobile's nationwide 5G network.

t-mobile.com

Sources: U.S. Army's Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP), Mission Critical: Unlocking the Value of Veterans in the Workforce, SFL-TAP exit questionnaires FY 2017, Center for Creative Leadership study and VetAdvisor's Veterans' Job Retention survey

"The trust he put in me allowed me to grow quickly and do work that aligns with my passion - being a coach and mentor," he acknowledges.

He also appreciates that T-Mobile values and supports diverse thinking. "T-Mobile values the skills and point of view that veterans bring - based on their experiences - that fuel innovation and create a strong community capable of driving positive change."

Because his own military skill set aligns with T-Mobile's values, Buckingham feels he's having a more successful career at T-Mobile than he would've had in a less-supportive environment.

Buckingham recommends transitioning veterans seek companies that are actively recruiting, hiring and supporting veterans. He points out that T-Mobile is committed to hiring 10,000 veterans and spouses by 2023.

Veterans should also look for companies that support employees during periods when they must return to military service such as in the National Guard and the Reserves.

"All deployed military employees and their families continue to have access to all of T-Mobile's benefit programs," he notes.

More information about T-Mobile is available at t-mobile.com/careers.

Connect on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.



After 22 years of active service in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he had four overseas deployments to 10 different countries, Oscar J. Atkinson has transferred his experience to PNC Bank where he's an operations supervisor.

ATKINSON'S MILITARY EXPERIENCE TRANSFERS WELL INTO PNC BANK CAREER

After 22 years of active service in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he had four overseas deployments to 10 different countries, Oscar J. Atkinson retired on July 1, 2016. "At my last duty station," he notes, "I was the Operations Chief for the Fitness Reports Sections at Marine Corps headquarters in Quantico, VA, which oversaw the audit and processing of evaluations for the entire Marine Corps."

Atkinson says several groups helped him to transition from the military to the civilian workforce. First, the retirement/transition program at Quantico provided help with writing a resume, interviewing and searching for jobs. American Corporate Partners also provided two mentors, who offered career advice and insight into the civilian workforce.



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ORACLE



MISSION: PNC

For more than 160 years, PNC Bank has been offering a wide range of services for all of its customers, from individuals and small businesses to corporations and government entities. Services include retail banking, corporate and institutional banking and asset management, as well as investment management via its minority ownership stake in BlackRock.

pnc.com

"The one that I can say helped me the most was the organization called Military MOJO, which is the Military Officers Job Opportunities," he explains.

At a Military MOJO job event in Philadelphia, PA, Atkinson met a PNC Bank representative, herself a former Marine, who was looking to hire former members of the military.

"She saw the potential in me," he remembers. "She was the driving force, ensuring I got an opportunity to apply and interview for multiple positions at PNC."

As a result, he joined the bank soon after he retired from the Marines.

Because of his operations experience while in the Marines, Atkinson came on board at PNC Bank as an operations supervisor. He says most of his training was done on the job. "Being a senior leader in the Marines, my main focus was on learning the terms and processes of my new role."

Currently "my team is responsible for reports that directly impact the loss mitigation process. My team ensures we remain compliant with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) requirements and internal regulations," explains Atkinson, who's presently pursuing a degree in business management.

An important change for him between the military and civilian workplace, he says, is to understand the difference between being a leader and being a manager.

"Managers assign tasks," he explains. "Leaders, however, inspire, empower, mentor, coach and elevate their teams to achieve success and, of course, leaders get all of the tasks done."

Skill sets such as teamwork, leadership, problem-solving and, "more importantly, getting the job done," easily transfer to the civilian workplace, according to Atkinson.

PNC has many local chapters of its Military Employee Business Readiness Group (EBRG). Atkinson is president of the Cleveland, OH chapter.

"My chapter is focused on mentoring, career-building and giving back to the community, with events such as The Homeless Stand Down, in which we assist with providing clothing and healthcare-related opportunities for the 300 homeless veterans in Cleveland."

Pittsburgh, PA-headquartered PNC also has a virtual military EBRG chapter for employees who don't have an actual one in their area.

More information about working at PNC is found at pnc.com and click on Careers. Connect on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Brassring.



As an operations service representative at Schneider National's Winter Haven, FL facility, Johnson has driven trucks for a number of the company's fleets, and has been a training engineer for the drivers of one fleet. The U.S. Army veteran is now responsible for the safety, training and evaluation of around 80 drivers.

JOHNSON HANDLES DRIVER TRAINING, SAFETY & EVALUATION FOR SCHNEIDER NATIONAL

Bernard Johnson remembers being stationed in Germany when he read about Schneider National, a freight transportation company, in *Army Times*. "I did an interview over the phone and had a job at Schneider waiting for me when I returned from Germany," Johnson details.

This was after 12.5 years of active duty in the U.S. Army, which he joined in 1980 at age 18. He was hired into Schneider as a truck driver and was on Inactive Reserve at the time.



MISSION: SCHNEIDER

One of the largest trucking carriers in North America, Schneider National has been a top choice of safety-minded drivers for more than 80 years. Schneider has been listed by *Forbes* as one of America's best employers, and is ranked a top-paying carrier by the National Transportation Institute. Along with accolades from customers for its drivers' service and performance, Schneider has been nationally recognized for its support of current and former military personnel among its ranks.

schneider.com



Between 2007 and 2009, the Army recalled Johnson to drive trucks in Iraq for the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).

"Even though it was technically a civilian job, Schneider recognized it was really military in nature, so they froze my pay and benefits," he says, adding that he's stayed with Schneider "because it's like a family [here]. I'd rather be part of a family than a business."

As an example, Johnson says, "I don't need an appointment to talk to anyone here. I can call someone, and they answer."

Headquartered in Green Bay, WI, Schneider provides long-distance, short-distance, intermodal and logistics services to its customers. Johnson notes that there are unlimited opportunities, with many different positions in different parts of the company for which he could apply to advance his career.

"I've always wanted to drive trucks," he says, adding that he's already done that at Schneider. Now he's taking the knowledge he gained and training other truck drivers. He is using his Army training to do that, too.

"I was a company training NCO (non-commissioned officer), team chief and platoon sergeant, and those leadership positions prepared me for the training that I do now at Schneider," he explains.

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Analytic Avengers ... Superheroes Protecting the Nation



Jisoo Beanland
Technical Analyst
and Korean Linguist Expert

Jisoo Beanland had her heart set on a career at Pixar or Disney. But as the visual arts major was finishing her degree, the Sept. 11 attacks happened. A Korean immigrant, Jisoo wondered how she could apply her bilingual capability to give back to her new country. She found the answer at NSA.

Starting off as a Language Analyst, Jisoo has embraced learning opportunities at NSA to move into more technical areas. Now a Technical Analyst and mentor, she's still using her creative skills from her art background, which heighten her ability to discover opportunities and details necessary for her day-to-day functions.

She knows her efforts contribute to a mission. "I imagine us as analytic 'Avengers,' superheroes trying to protect the nation."

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The Army instilled in Johnson discipline and a focus on safety, both skills necessary for driving. He was also determined to acquire licenses to drive as many different kinds of vehicles as he could.

"Driving in the Army taught me the importance of preventive maintenance and services for vehicles, including trucks. All of these practices are now just second nature to me at Schneider," he notes.

As an operations service representative in Schneider's Winter Haven, FL facility, Johnson has driven trucks for a number of the company's fleets, and was a training engineer for the drivers of one fleet. From 2010 to 2017, he spent about 75% of his time "hauling freight" and 25% attending recruiting and military events.

"I'm responsible for the safety, training and evaluation of around 80 drivers," he says of his current position.

Johnson tells transitioning veterans: "Follow your dream and have a passion for what you do. Nothing is going to be peaches and cream, but don't quit on the first challenge."

For more information about Schneider National's open positions, log onto schneiderjobs.com. Connect on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube, plus Instagram, Pinterest, Google+ and Snapchat.

A 'LEAP OF FAITH' LEADS COLES-DIXON TO A CIVILIAN CAREER AT ACCENTURE



Aleathia Coles-Dixon's active duty in the U.S. Army, where she served in military intelligence, has led her to Accenture Federal Services, the wholly owned subsidiary of Accenture which serves the federal government. She's a SAP business warehouse developer in software engineering and part of a team that supports a defense support agency.

Project's Warriors to Work program, where she was introduced to NS2Serves, a three-month-long certificate program that trains veterans in software solutions that support U.S. national security.

"They taught me modeling and data management - how to

According to Aleathia Coles-Dixon, "the military instills, in every soldier, discipline, determination [and] the ability to learn anything that is thrown their way." In the case of Coles-Dixon, who left the U.S. Army after about seven years of active duty, where she served in military intelligence, her military training additionally "prepared me to be able to adapt to any new situation and working conditions."

She went on to serve as a civilian contractor in Afghanistan after transitioning out of the military. During that time she completed a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration.

"Either as a civilian contractor or now a SAP software developer [at Accenture], the IT world changes constantly, so I am able to make those changes without falling behind," she notes.

Coles-Dixon says that, upon returning from her 18 months in Afghanistan, she connected with Jacksonville, FL-based Wounded Warrior

Former Army Captain Chambers Charts Path to Success at NGA

For Bryant Chambers, identifying a career early on meant following a dual path.

First, enrolling in and graduating from Hampton University in Virginia with a bachelor's degree in computer science.

Second, following in the footsteps of his dad and older brother, he was commissioned in the U.S. Army, where he served four years in active service in a combat-based division.

Achieving the rank of Captain, he was deployed to Iraq and spent an additional four years in the Army Reserves.

After separating from the service, Chambers held an impressive position at a Fortune 500 company, leaving to join the Springfield, VA-headquartered National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) in 2009.

Beginning as a communications officer, he was promoted a year ago to his current position as corporate communications plans and operations lead. Today he relies on both his educational background and military leadership expertise when carrying out his responsibilities at this 14,000-employee agency.

Identifying NGA as a unique combination of an intelligence and a combat support agency that provides national security and defense as well as disaster relief, Chambers indicates that his decision to join the NGA was based on the agency's mission, culture and dedication to employing our nation's heroes. Factored in that decision, as well, was the provision of an amicable work-life balance and geographic proximity to his home, especially as the then father of an infant son.

Pleased with his choice of employer, Chambers enjoys the people he works with, as well as his role in corporate communications where he carries out planning and assisting NGA connect with outside agencies.

Trained as a facilitator, he relishes his role as an informal mentor at NGA, and a formal mentor and volunteer outside of work.

For those newly separated from the service, Chambers advises veterans of the need to realize that they face a different "landscape" when they enter the private or government civilian sectors.

"That's particularly true for veterans who were involved in combat," he states. "There's definitely a learning curve to be aware of."

And for individuals engaged in computer science-related positions, Chambers acknowledges the need to be habitual learners in this challenging and fast-evolving field.

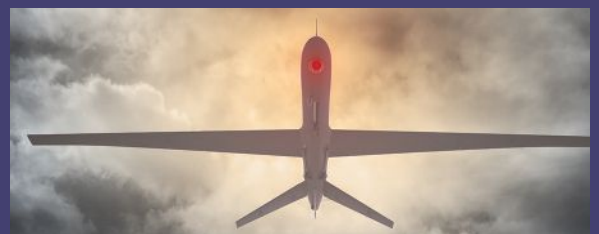
"The computer arena changes so rapidly that the material I learned in college is relatively out-of-date today," he asserts.

But for all veterans entering the civilian sector, Chambers' prime advice is to determine the field and work that fit and interest you as an individual.

"Choose an area you are passionate about and where you believe you can contribute and make a difference," he counsels, concluding by paraphrasing this military phrase: "The persons who know the problems they are trying to solve - and who know themselves - will never be in danger of losing."

For further information about NGA, go to nga.mil/Careers/Pages/default.aspx and social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr and Google+.

— Barbara Woodworth



MISSION: NGA

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is the nation's primary source of geospatial intelligence, or GEOINT, for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Intelligence Community.

nga.mil

model, extract, load, analyze and report on data - that prepared me for the career that I have today," she remembers.

"I also learned basic skills required for a civilian career like presentation, communication and job interview skills. She credits the help she got transitioning out of the military with successfully moving her into a civilian career.

During Coles-Dixon's training, an Accenture representative spoke to the veterans and conducted onsite interviews. Although Coles-Dixon had a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration, she took what she calls "a leap of faith" when, after completing her training and receiving several certificates, she received a job offer from Accenture Federal Services, the wholly owned subsidiary of Accenture which serves the federal government, and joined the company as a SAP business warehouse developer in software engineering.

"I'm now a part of a team that supports a defense support agency," she says. "My job as a developer is to analyze and apply system fixes to correct errors for clients and to improve program performance."

When she came on board, Accenture provided Coles-Dixon with formal and informal training, as well as what she says is "a robust veterans' support system."

A global professional services company, Accenture offers strategy, consulting, digital and technology services to a wide variety of businesses and business functions. It has global headquarters in Dublin, Ireland and U.S. headquarters in New York, NY. It's committed to hiring 5,000 military veterans and their spouses by the year 2020, and is willing to work with those without tech backgrounds.

Coles-Dixon says Accenture's military recruiting team is composed



MISSION: ACCENTURE -----

Accenture is a global professional services company that provides a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations.

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of veterans who use their personal experiences to help service members who are transitioning. They provide a range of support, including individual career planning, resume writing and interview preparation. They also work with military-focused non-profit programs like NS2Serves and attend military-focused career fairs across the country.

Coles-Dixon is part of Accenture's Military Employee Resource Group and LGBT Employee Resource Group.

In The Next Issue

FALL 2018

- Annual Career-Planning Edition
- Retail Management Careers
- Supplier Diversity
- Hospitality/Gaming/Hotel Management
- Pharmaceutical/Biomedical Industry
- Education
- Telecom
- Special 50th Anniversary Section



Employers Compete for Vets as Unemployment Rate Edges Lower

In July 2018 the veteran unemployment rate was **3%**, which is the lowest July veteran unemployment rate since 2000, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has recently reported. The non-veteran unemployment rate for July 2018 was **4%** (not seasonally adjusted) while the national unemployment rate edged down to **3.9%**.

Here are the latest unemployment numbers:

- **National Unemployment Rate:** 3.9% in July 2018.
- **Non-Veteran Unemployment Rate:** 4% in July 2018.
- **Veteran Unemployment Rate:** 3% in July 2018.
- **Women Veterans Unemployment:** 2.4% in July 2018.
- **Gulf War-Era II Veterans Unemployment:** 3% in July 2018.

For more insights from that DOL report, visit dol.gov/vets/latest-numbers.

In addition, the unemployment rate for veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time since September 2001 - a group referred to as Gulf War-era II veterans - edged down to 3% in July, according to DOL, as shown above. In 2017 that rate was 4.5%, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported earlier this year.

BLS also noted the **jobless rate for all veterans declined from 4.3% to 3.7% in 2017**. And about 41% of Gulf War-era II veterans had a service-connected disability in August 2017, compared with 24% of all veterans.

Other highlights from the 2017 BLS data include:

- The unemployment rate for male veterans (**3.6%**) declined over the year, and the rate for female veterans (**4.1%**) changed little in 2017. The unemployment rate for male veterans was not statistically different from the rate for female veterans.
- Among the 370,000 unemployed veterans in 2017, **59%** were age 25 to 54, **37%** were age 55 and older, and **4%** were age 18 to 24.
- Veterans with a service-connected disability had an unemployment rate of 4.3% in August 2017, little different from veterans with no disability (4.5%).

For more insights from the BLS report, visit www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.nr0.htm.

"It's empowering to be surrounded by leaders and colleagues who share the same military and life experiences, and know that we are there to support one another," she explains.

Both groups focus on strengthening and cultivating a cohesive community via championing involvement, fostering stewardship and promoting mentorship. She also mentors newer team members and younger colleagues, and is pursuing a master's degree in psychology.

Go to accenture.com/us-en/careers for more information about company jobs. Career opportunities for veterans are listed at accenture.com/us-en/careers/find-your-fit-military-cleared-professionals. Connect on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Google+.

Is There a 'Typical' Veteran?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are roughly 18.5 million veterans in the country. Do you really know what a veteran is? Is there such a thing as a "typical" veteran. The more we learn about this unique group, the more we become aware of the diversity that our nation's veterans represent.

"Veterans have served our country proudly, and have ensured our freedom endures," explains Nicole Motsek, executive director of the EOD Warrior Foundation, eodwarriorfoundation.org, an organization that helps the families of the 7,000 people in the military who are explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians, and perform bomb-disposal duties.

"Veterans are made up of a diverse group of service-men and -women, representing every aspect of this country."

The statistics show that **1.6 million** of the veterans are women, almost **12%** of them are African-American and just more than **6%** of them are Hispanic. When it comes to age, **9.2 million** of our veterans are older than 65, while **1.6 million** of them are younger than 35.

Additional interesting facts from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) about what a veteran is include:

- **Careers:** Female veterans are more likely to have com-

pleted some college compared to non-veteran females. They are also **7%** more likely to be working in management and professional occupations, and twice as likely to be working for state, local or federal government.

- **Wages:** Compared to non-veterans of the same age, veterans who work full-time had higher earnings.

- **Entrepreneurs:** According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), more than **2.5 million** businesses are majority-owned by veterans, which is around **9%** of all firms. Of that, more than **442,000** of them employ other people, employing more than **5 million** people. Their businesses collectively earn around **\$1.14 trillion** per year.

- **Industries:** The top industries where veteran entrepreneurs own businesses include professional, scientific and technical services, followed by construction. The top states with veteran-owned businesses include California, Texas, Florida, New York and Pennsylvania.

"One look at the statistics on veterans tells us there isn't a 'typical' veteran," adds Motsek. "Our veterans come from all backgrounds, religions and neighborhoods, and have a diverse background. We're proud of all of our veterans and for all they've contributed to this country during times of war."

PROGRESSIVE'S PERONA DRAWS ON HER NAVAL EXPERIENCE



A veteran of the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserve, Ashley Perona draws upon her military experience and myriad technical and people skills when carrying out her civilian job as multi-product insurance agent and a recruiter loan-in with the talent acquisition group at Progressive Insurance.

For the past two years, Ashley Perona has been a multi-product insurance agent at Progressive Insurance. Before that she served five years active duty in the U.S. Navy as an AO2 (aviation ordnanceman), which is an aircraft armament (weapons) specialists in charge of storing, servicing, inspecting and handling of all types of weapons and ammunition carried on Navy aircraft.

That was followed by six years in the Navy Reserve working with the Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) as a training facilitator (AO1).

"My experience in the military instilled in me a work ethic recognized and appreciated by my supervisors and coworkers," says Perona, acknowledging that many of the skills she uses on the job today emanate from those fostered by the military.

"Leadership, teamwork, adaptability, complex problem-solving and computer facility, to name just a few."

After acquiring myriad technical and people skills, Perona

found that as she prepared to separate from the military her interest in and curiosity about the Mayfield Village, OH-headquartered company piqued.

"Although it was a huge change to jump into the private sector, I found my long-held core values, and those of the company, were very much in line with those of the Navy," remarks Perona, who first worked post-Navy at Baltimore, MD-based Social Security Administration before joining Progressive.

Now working in a second capacity in Progressive's talent acquisition group as a recruiter loan-in, she enjoys the opportunity to obtain hands-on experience in a different part of the business while maintaining her permanent position.

"In my loan-in capacity I'm able to use my experience to help identify candidates believed to be a good match for the positions they seek," explains Perona, who is excited about her career growth possibilities.

"Along with the company's dedication to develop their employees through opportunities, such as my loan-in assignment to recruiting, Progressive's drive to continue evolving with the needs of their customers tells me that I have a strong professional future here."

As for the skills she finds most necessary for success, Perona highlights critical thinking, attention to detail and computer capability. "My advice to other veterans looking for potential careers at Progressive is to highlight your military experience and be yourself," she states.

She also recommends learning about the company's mission statement and values, and aligning them with your own.

Perona enjoys the people she works with as well as serving as "brand ambassador" for Progressive. As the "first face" applicants and potential new hires interact with she feels a sense of accomplishment when she recommends potential candidates for consideration for positions at the company. She also serves as an ambassador for the company's employee resource group MILNET (Military Network). She's also participated in a diversity and inclusion video highlighting veteran employees at Progressive.

"By sharing my military experience I showcase the many occupations available to veterans at Progressive that provide transferrable skills," she states.

For further information about Progressive Insurance, go to progressive.com, progressive.com/careers, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Glassdoor, Instagram and LinkedIn.

— Barbara Woodworth



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The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is the nation's primary source of geospatial intelligence, or GEOINT, for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Intelligence Community.

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Marketing Mavens

CAREERS IN COMMUNICATIONS ALLOW YOU TO ENGAGE AN AUDIENCE WHILE SHARING KEY INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS, BRANDS, PRODUCTS AND THE LATEST NEWS.

A career in communications is so much more than attending social events and networking on behalf of clients. It encompasses myriad skills - not the least of which is engaging people in person and via various media platforms. And your specific niche could be found in marketing, social media or public relations.

For one, a career in PR quite often encompasses social media knowledge, diligent organization, and a knack for advertising and branding, and much more.

According to British online lifestyle magazine *Your Coffee Break*, public relations success further depends on a focus on building trusting relationships, the ability to write well and a passion for helping brands and people grow their reputations.

Not to mention, you'll need know what's happening in the news 24-7, be easily accessible to clients - sometimes on weekends - and be laser-focused on social media and content marketing for your clients.

If you'd like to learn more about this competitive field for go-getters, read on to meet five social media and PR experts in various industries who offer an inside look into what they do and share their career advice.

BY RACHEL SOKOL

PARK CREATES & DELIVERS MARKETING MATERIALS FOR MAIDPRO

Maine native Madeleine Park is the marketing manager/new brand specialist for Boston, MA-based MaidPro, a residential cleaning franchisor with more than 250 offices across North America. Park's been with MaidPro for just a little more than a year.

"What I enjoy most about my industry and my current role, is my ability to work with both our creative and business departments," says the half-Korean, half-Irish businesswoman who moved to Boston to attend Framingham University and cultivate her interest in the marketing and advertising industry.

"It's a lot of fun to develop ideas and strategies that will grow our business and later get to see those ideas come to life through the creative process."

**"Be ready to shake
things up!"**

Specifically, Park's current responsibilities at MaidPro include "collaborating with the franchise development team and consumer development team to research and identify target audiences, assist with the creative strategy of both franchise and consumer marketing campaigns across email, direct mail, social media and ad hoc campaigns, managing corporate social media accounts and more."

Park feels that "marketing is a lot of research, 'think-tanking' and teamwork. It's very interesting to see how different campaigns are received by the public; it's a great feeling to pass by a billboard or branded car that you helped to create and design!"

Her career advice is to "be ready to shake things up! The media is constantly changing, and you don't want to be the person that gets stuck always 'doing what you did last year.' Don't be afraid to bring up new ideas, be creative and take risks."

Park further encourages young communications professionals to "stand behind your ideas and opinions, but also realize that marketing is a long-term, team game. You cannot go at it alone."

In addition, she recommends joining clubs, especially in college or grad school. "I made an effort to join advertising and marketing clubs whenever possible, so I could get experience and build my resume," says Park.

"Every little bit counts when you're just starting out. Do what you can to meet industry people, even if it's just grabbing coffee with someone in marketing. It really is about who you are, and how well you can network and advocate for yourself, off paper."

For this marketing maven and philanthropist, giving back to the

community is important, as well. In fact, she's also the founder and president of Together She Can, a Boston-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization that works to help the homeless community with hygiene care.

"We partner with local companies, hotels, and individuals to collect new and gently used toiletry items. We've recently partnered with Sephora, Garnet Hill and Girl Scouts of America, and are hoping to expand nationally within the next five years."

Make your way to jobs.maidpro.com for MaidPro possibilities. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

DEFRANK IDENTIFIES PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR BET

Bronx, NY (and Dominican Republic) native Luis Defrank, director of corporate communications at BET Networks in New York, NY was drawn to public relations. "My love for pop culture and television is what attracted me to the field of public relations," he explains. "Another driving factor is the work that goes into building a press narrative on a project that ultimately influences viewing decisions and generates buzz."

Defrank's core responsibility is to publicize BET Networks programming and its digital, on-air and off-air properties.

"This includes drafting and executing press plans, press releases and programming notes for BET Networks programming," says the New York University (NYU) grad who earned his master's degree in education with a bilingual extension from City College of New York.

"I also pitch weekly national publications for stories and event coverage, and coordinate talent and executive interviews. Additionally, part of my job is to identify publicity opportunities for all of our initiatives and networks efforts."

Founded in 1979 and headquartered in Washington, DC, BET Networks, a subsidiary of Viacom Inc., is a provider of entertainment, music news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 90 million households, and can be seen in the U.S., Canada, the Caribbean, the U.K. and sub-Saharan Africa.

"Network! It's important that you start building organic connections early on with others in this field."

With the company for 14 years, Defrank likes that every single day is different. "I could be on a press tour with talent in the morning, drafting remarks to a keynote address by our general manager in the afternoon, and hosting a media screening for one of our upcoming digital series in the evening."

Some of his recent projects include launching the publicity efforts for *The New Edition Story* and the inaugural BET Social Awards, and announcing BET's digital partnerships with Beautycon and Amazon with BET Breaks.

"Currently I'm working on a few speaking engagements for our senior leadership team, the launch of our film contest, Project Cre8, that gives aspiring, undiscovered filmmakers the opportunity to produce



Madeleine Park is the marketing manager/new brand specialist for MaidPro.



Luis Defrank is the director of corporate communications at BET Networks.

an original film, and the return of Freestyle Friday, the global search for the next big MC.”

Defrank’s job is creative in “so many ways,” from drafting an eye-catching headline for one of BET’s press releases to planning a red carpet launch event. “I’m able to provide a lot of creative input and think ‘outside of the box.’ With my creativity opportunities I can make our events/materials stand out and result in press stories.”

He calls public relations “an ever-changing landscape,” and explains that while some may see social media as an untraditional platform to release information, he sees it as a much-needed and valuable tool to help maximize your message.

“The immediacy of social media may mean we need to move much faster if messaging catches fire in a negative way, but it’s just one added element that all well-rounded executives need to be prepared for,” says Defrank.

His career advice? “Network! It’s important that you start building organic connections early on with others in this field. Even in your own classroom and circle of friends you may have a great pool of influencers that can help you score the career of your dreams, or teach you a skill that you can transfer into your PR skill set.”

Browse betcareers.viacom.com for BET careers. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

ARMY VET LEE CREATES MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES FOR ANIME FANS AT ELLATION

Originally from Chicago, IL Aimee Lee is currently a consumer media relations specialist for Ellation Inc., a San Francisco, CA-based transformative entertainment company. Ellation is part of Otter Media, which was a joint venture between AT&T and The Chernin Group. In August this year AT&T bought out The Chernin Group’s stake in Otter Media to gain full ownership. Otter Media - and Ellation under the umbrella of Otter Media - is now part of AT&T’s WarnerMedia unit.

Ellation is also home of Crunchyroll and VRV. Crunchyroll features anime videos and online forums; VRV features anime, as well as gaming, fantasy animations, niche cartoons, multi-platform sci-fi short films and more.

“I develop relationships with media contacts to ensure consumer-facing news, launches, announcements, events and more are promoted,” Lee says of her current role at Ellation.

“I enjoy the field of PR I’m in, which is in media, technology and entertainment. I’m also an anime fan and fan of Ellation’s streaming services, Crunchyroll and VRV. Our mission is to create experiences for passionate communities to connect through the content they love.”

Lee discusses some of the latest streaming products: “Our Spring season outreach for Crunchyroll launched with some great new and continuing titles. We also had our Crunchyroll Movie Night earlier this year in theaters showing *Bungo Stray Dogs*, a Japanese manga (comic) series. We also launched a few new shows as well as locked in some great partnerships with WB and MGM for our channel partner, VRV.”



Aimee Lee is currently a consumer media relations specialist for Ellation Inc.

But there's more to Lee than one may realize, and she's more than a PR executive. Not only does she work in media relations for a major tech company, she also proudly served her country.

After spending two years at Purdue University, Lee joined the U.S. Army in 2010 as a Private First Class and worked as a paralegal specialist for the JAG Corps.

"You definitely need to be outgoing and have a self-sufficient attitude, as well as self-motivation and great networking skills."

"My first duty station was Fort Lee, VA, and then I was stationed for the remainder of my contract in Okinawa, Japan. I left the military with an honorable discharge in June of 2014 with the rank of Sergeant," Lee details.

Back in the states, she decided to attend The Art Institute of California - San Francisco, and earned a bachelor's degree in advertising.

"I started working in PR in 2016 with internships, freelance work and a part-time agency gig as a junior account executive. I started as the consumer media relations specialist for Ellation in March of 2018."

She adds: "Yes, most of my colleagues are surprised that I'm a veteran! My Army experience helped me adapt to a fast-paced environment, as well as working with cross-functional teams for one goal. It's helped me stay flexible, detail-oriented and organized."

The biggest misconception about the field of PR, notes Lee, is that just anyone can do it. "You definitely need to be outgoing and have a self-sufficient attitude, as well as self-motivation and great networking skills."

Persistence has paid off for Lee, so her career advice is to "be someone who keeps trying when rejected!"

**Explore ellation.com/jobs for Ellation open positions.
Connect on Twitter and LinkedIn.**

LACOUR HELPS TELL VOYA FINANCIAL'S ENTERPRISE STORY

Talk about a career change! Going from a legal assistant right out of college to later becoming the vice president, external communications at Voya Financial. But that's exactly what Jeanne LaCour has done. "My first job out of college was as a legal assistant on the litigation side of a global law firm," the Voya communications executive recalls. "I wanted to be a lawyer, and learned a lot as part of my experience with the firm, but it was hard to see the impact of my contributions."

Instead of pursuing law school, LaCour - who is based in Voya Financial's corporate office in New York, NY - pursued financial journalism.

"From there, I went to business school as a way to deepen my understanding of business strategy, corporate finance, risk and other areas that businesses grapple with. Communications was a natural transition given the intersection of my background," shares LaCour, who earned a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Dartmouth College and an MBA in finance from Columbia Business School.

Prior to joining Voya three years ago, most of her career was spent as a communications consultant, working with companies going through transitions of all types - legal or regulatory issues, bankruptcies, business disruptions and so forth.

"My experience runs across various industries, with an emphasis on financial services and healthcare. I think the breadth of my experience, both from a business strategy and communications perspective, is a key strength I bring to Voya."

LaCour adds: "We have an experienced, high-performing team; each member with his or her own unique skills and background - and our leadership genuinely appreciates the diversity of thought we bring to the business."

Her focus is currently on telling the enterprise story of New York, NY-based Voya, an American financial, retirement, investment and insurance company founded in 1991.

"What differentiates us from others; how our culture and values, business mix and strategy drive our success; and what insight, perspective and point of view Voya can offer the organizations and people that sell our products to help them become more knowledgeable or make better decisions," she details.

Her team implements brand and corporate communications strategies to enhance and improve the company's reputation with media, customers, partners and other external stakeholders.

"I work closely with Voya leadership to identify opportunities where we can solidify the company's view on key issues in the marketplace. I'm always looking for insight that we can share to help people manage their finances and prepare for, and live in, retirement."



Jeanne LaCour is the vice president, external communications at Voya Financial.

LaCour and her colleagues also “focus on social media for institutional and consumer clients, as well as communications that raise awareness of our efforts in corporate responsibility; law, compliance and public affairs; and risk.”

“We ask hard questions, and we have honest, in-depth discussions that result in better outcomes for our businesses.”

Additionally, LaCour is always working on multiple projects at once, which is one of the things she enjoys most about her job. “Right now, I’m really focused on building the infrastructure that we need to be successful from a social media, digital and more traditional media standpoint.”

She enjoys the culture at her job, too, and enjoys coming to work every day. “Every company talks about values and culture, but we really try to live them here, and that’s true from our senior-most leaders to the individuals working in our call centers, to our sales teams out in the field. This isn’t a ‘go along to get along’ company. We ask hard questions, and we have honest, in-depth discussions that result in better outcomes for our businesses.”

View corporate.voya.com/careers for Voya opportunities. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and YouTube.

SUKUMAR EXECUTES MEDIA STRATEGY AT JOHNSON & JOHNSON

When you wash your face before bed, or guzzle down an over-the-counter pill to alleviate a headache, you may think, eh, no big deal, just doing what I need to do. However, there’s a whole development team behind that everyday face wash you’re using, and the medicine you’re taking!

New York City’s Divya Sukumar, social media manager, is on the creative front lines at New Brunswick, NJ-based Johnson & Johnson (J&J), which was founded in 1886. Some of the multinational medical devices, pharmaceutical and consumer packaged goods manufacturing company’s many familiar brands and products include Johnson’s Baby, Neutrogena, BAND-AID, Listerine, Motrin and more.

Born in Chennai, India and raised in West Palm Beach, FL, Sukumar - a University of South Florida graduate - is part of the Global Content Lab at Johnson & Johnson.

“It’s a best-in-class, 24-7 newsroom and creative agency that promotes external reputation-based storytelling, supports J&J’s businesses and amplifies the company’s core values as a purpose-driven organization,” she explains.

“I oversee Johnson & Johnson’s corporate social media channels. My responsibilities include executing social media strategy, developing and publishing content, social listening and analytics reporting”

Additionally, she works closely with the Global Content Lab and across the J&J enterprise, including with other social channel

owners and communicators to determine any synergies.

“A social media manager is one of the most public-facing positions, tasked with being the ‘voice’ of the entity, externally,” Sukumar points out. “It’s fun being able to work on a variety of projects, which means I also get the opportunity to work with so many talented colleagues around the world.”

She also collaborates with a community moderation team and social media agency that help support the company’s channels.

Since most individuals have a personal social media presence, such as a Facebook or Instagram account, they may not initially understand the professional skills required for a job in social media.

Sukumar outlines exactly what’s required: “You need to be highly creative, analytical and strategic, all at the same time. You also need to understand marketing, branding, customer engagement, crisis management, public relations, data analysis and so forth.”

Representing a global brand on social media, she adds, is vastly different than sharing a status update with friends and family.

Sukumar’s been with Johnson & Johnson for almost two years, and her first major campaign was the global rollout of the company’s extended parental leave.

“The Global Content Lab brought to life heartwarming stories of employees who leveraged the company’s industry-lea-

ding benefits through rich multi-media assets including original videos, animated GIFs and infographics.”

Showcasing real employees and talking about bonding with their newborns created powerful stories to which others could relate, and the campaign earned Johnson & Johnson a PR News Digital PR Award for Facebook Communications.

As for where her motivation to succeed and thrive in the second-by-second nature of social media, she credits her parents.

“My parents are my biggest motivators. Like most immigrant families, they moved to the U.S. to provide better opportunities for their kids,” says Sukumar, joking, “I still don’t think they quite understand my job, but they seem proud nonetheless!”

Her career advice is to be someone who adapts easily to change. New platforms are always being introduced, algorithms are always changing, and

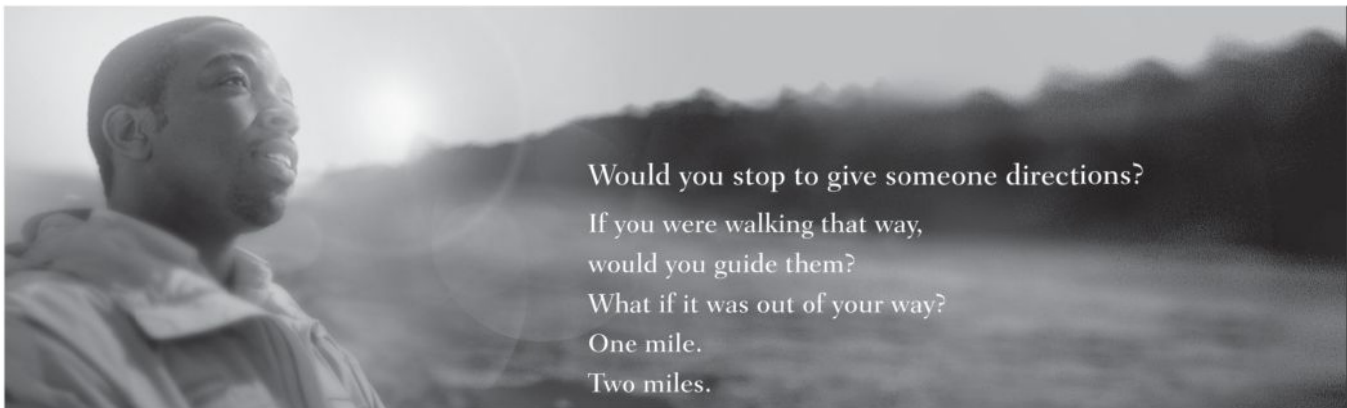
you have to be able to keep up.

“Other important skills include copywriting, analytics and design, and as with many jobs, you should be organized, able to multitask and work well under pressure. But, most importantly, you should have a passion for social media.”

Check careers.jnj.com for Johnson & Johnson jobs. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.



Divya Sukumar is a social media manager and part of the Global Content Lab at Johnson & Johnson.



Would you stop to give someone directions?

If you were walking that way,
would you guide them?

What if it was out of your way?

One mile.

Two miles.

Two thousand miles,
directly inland from the Skeleton Coast,
to a one-room schoolhouse in the foothills of Namibia.

What if you were the teacher in that schoolhouse?

Would you travel that far to teach someone?

To learn something yourself?

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Race to the Top

THERE'S NO SLOWING DOWN
AUTOMOTIVE PROFESSIONALS
WHO STEER THEIR COMPANIES
TOWARD SUCCESS AND AWAY
FROM SPEED BUMPS.

Throughout most of the past decade, the automotive industry has performed at top speeds. By 2016 it registered a record seven years of year-after-year growth with millions of new cars produced and purchased annually.

Now the sector is bracing for disruption in the form of an international financial faceoff. Proposed changes to trade policies leave automakers wondering from where, how and at what costs they'll secure the thousands of components required to assemble a single vehicle, much less what's necessary to produce millions. Any changes to current trade policies now and in the future will affect business both coming and going.

But that's one issue. Automotive suppliers must map out strategies to deal with any number of circumstances - from weathering potential trade changes to implementing new tech and safety features - that may benefit and challenge their profitability and longevity in the industry.

Read on to see how these four professionals help steer their companies toward continued success and away from any potential bumps in the road.

BY ANNE BAYE ERICKSEN

HU & ZF NORTH AMERICA PICTURE THE FUTURE

Safe driving demands staying aware of several changing environmental factors, be it traffic, road conditions or unexpected obstacles, and then making split-second decisions to compensate accordingly. So when it comes to autonomous-driving vehicles, whose eyes will be watching the road? That's the question Jacqueline Hu, senior product engineer for ZF North America Inc., is trying to answer.

"With each passing day, the automotive industry is heading toward autonomous driving. This is when safety becomes a very important aspect of our products," she says. "We're continuously improving our products to provide the highest level of safety features to the customer."

"We were awarded
a 2017
Innovation Award
from Nissan for
our current
mass production
camera SCAM3.5
for the ProPilot
feature."

ZF North America boasts 11 sites throughout the U.S., including regional offices in Northville, MI. In addition to improving legacy technologies such as chassis and brake systems, the organization has added automated driving to its key developmental areas.

Even though the public maintains a wait-and-see stance toward the concept of driverless cars sharing the highways and city streets, industry decision-makers have committed to delivering the technology.

Innovators have already road-tested early models, and engineers like Hu, who design and create system components, are along for the ride. She and her team already have made inroads with the introduction of the Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS).

"The intent is to provide all necessary inputs to the ADAS controller, and make the car smart to detect an object (type, location and speed) and operate in the right direction," Hu explains.

Of course, this type of technology isn't exclusive to autonomous cars. ZF partners with manufacturers to enhance new vehicle models, such as adding the ProPilot Assist feature to Nissan's Rogue SUV and Leaf electric car. According to a review on *Forbes.com*, the enhanced cruise control system engages high-tech cameras to scan road surfaces and traffic flow. Software uses the images to calculate safe distances and automatically adjusts cruise speeds. The system also provides an emergency stop mechanism, as well as lane departure prevention sensors.

Hu and her team earned a starring role in designing these perceptive cameras. In fact, it was an award-winning performance.

"We were awarded a 2017 Innovation Award from Nissan for our current mass production camera SCAM3.5 for the ProPilot feature," she boasts.





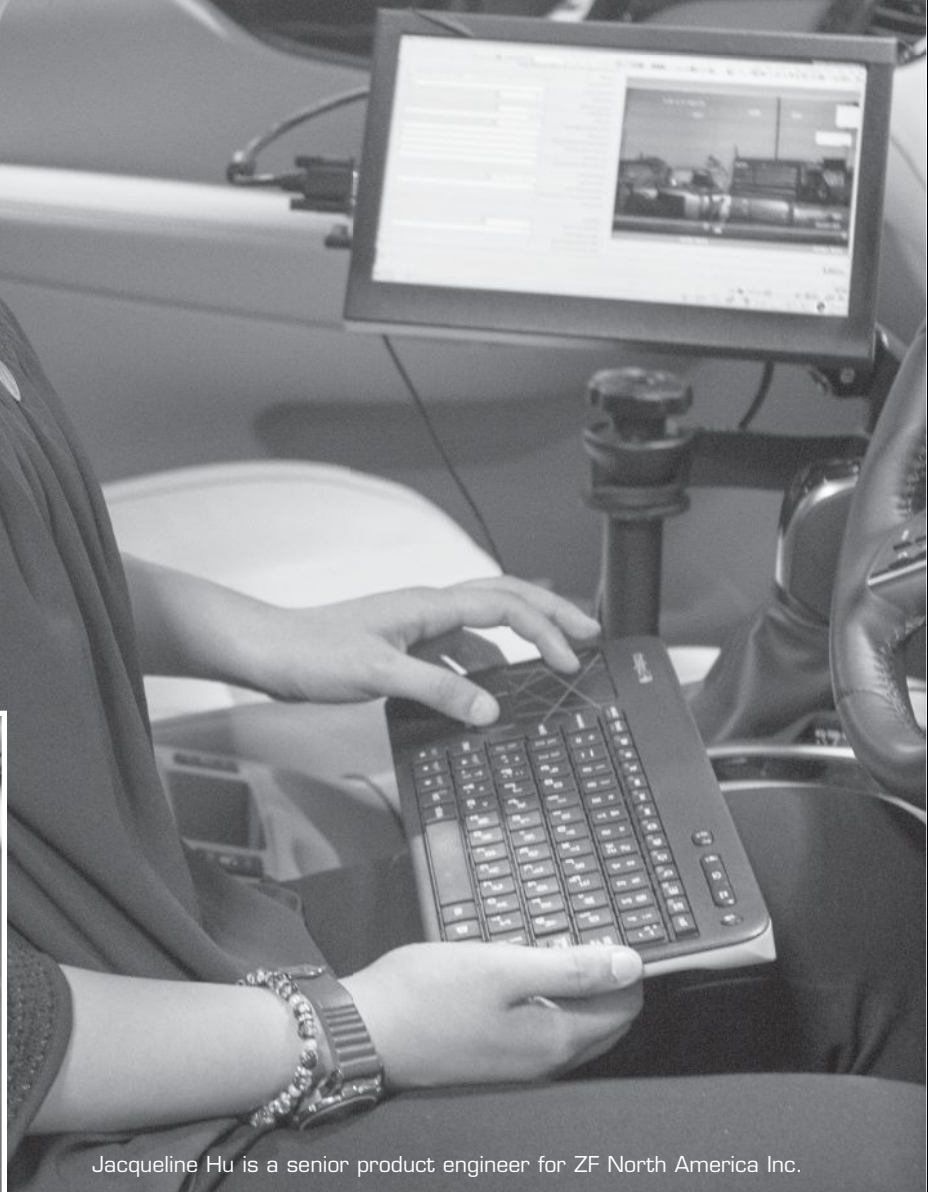
For Hu, one of the outstanding differences of working with a component producer versus a big automaker is the chance to get into the nitty-gritty of a specific function as opposed to considering the overall vehicle design and performance. She enjoys the specificity.

"By working at a supplier location, you get to work in depth with electronics - design and test every aspect of the module before it's mass-produced for each OEM. You go into the minute details, and get to learn and expand your knowledge of what can be possible with electronics," she explains.

But technology is not her biggest challenge. "The biggest challenge we face is time," she states.

"Time plays a critical role during the complete phase of camera design and development of lifecycles. But all the hard work pays off in the end, especially when you see your design exhibited at public events. In my case, ZF's camera has been showcased at multiple global automotive events."

Shift your career into high gear by checking out jobs with ZF North America Inc. at zf.com/corporate/en_de/career/career_homepage.html. Map out company happenings on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.



Jacqueline Hu is a senior product engineer for ZF North America Inc.



SPEARS STEERS RECRUITMENT FOR CONTINENTAL CORPORATION USA

Traditionally, technical jobs within the automotive manufacturing sector were filled by mechanical, electrical and industrial engineers. Automakers and suppliers competed among each other for top talent in these disciplines. However, as more and more components became computerized, companies' personnel needs broadened into information technology (IT), programmers and hardware designers. Numerous other industries also now vie for these same technical professionals, and, as a result, recruiting competition has only deepened in recent years.

"Our biggest challenge is finding innovative ways to attract and retain top talent. These challenges are exciting and worthwhile, especially when we find a stellar candidate," says Shelby Spears, a technical recruiter for Continental Corporation USA.

Further complicating the job market is that the automotive industry no longer consists of just OEMs and major component suppliers, many of which remain mechanical in nature.

"There are many startups and big-name companies in the area that we're competing against, not just in automotive, but also in the tech industry. I see non-traditional companies entering the automotive space more and more, and this is increasing the competition for talent," says Spears.

This evolution means recruiters must expand their networks to find candidates. Spears has the advantage of understanding the tech sector after recruiting for entertainment innovator Netflix and the genetic testing company Helix, among others. Last year, he switched to Continental and now staffs its Silicon Valley Research Development Center.

Continental was founded in the late 19th century as a rubber products producer, including carriage and bicycle tires. In the 21st century, the company, with U.S. corporate offices in the Auburn Hills, MI, has gone high-tech. At the R&D Center, engineers and other technical experts advance mobile connectivity, hybrid technology and, of course, autonomous vehicle features.

"I'm no longer working for a direct consumer-facing industry. Instead of hiring people who are working on products consumers use, you're working to hire people who work on a backend technology that many consumers are not aware of," says Spears.

Whether hiring for companies that directly sell products to individuals or for businesses that supply other companies, talent acquisition involves more than just fulfilling a checklist of hard skills and professional experiences. Spears seeks candidates who will contribute creatively, a characteristic that can be enhanced by embracing diversity.

"Whether it be in age, nationality, sexual orientation [or] disabilities, our differences enrich us with many different skills, strengths and talents. Having a diverse talent pool brings pioneering ideas, innovative products and new business models to consider," he comments.

"The best ideas come from many different minds working together, so if we're going to continue to grow as an industry, then we'll need to continue to hear new and diverse perspectives. People

Shelby Spears is a technical recruiter for Continental Corporation USA.



come from all over to work at Continental on life-changing technologies, and they're truly excited to be here. That's what I love most about my job."

Spears also values the fact that his hires improve the overall safety of vehicles, and, therefore, drivers and passengers.

"Working toward a goal that will eliminate fatalities is inspiring to me," he notes. "I'm proud that I get to be a part of that process by finding and hiring the right talent that will change how we think about autonomous vehicles and get to the stage of no accidents or deaths."

Shift your career into high gear by checking out jobs with Continental Corporation USA at continental-corporation.com/en/career/overview. Map out company happenings on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and Glassdoor.

MATTHEWS EYES THE ROAD AHEAD FOR GENTEX

Eight years ago, ash spewed out of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano for six consecutive days. Plumes rose more than five miles into the sky, wreaking havoc on air travel throughout western and central Europe. Because planes were grounded, passengers were forced to secure other modes of transportation. Trains sold out. Rental car companies dispatched their fleets, and highways became jammed with heavier-than-usual traffic.

While the volcanic activity inconvenienced travelers, it created a logistical dilemma for Joe Matthews. Having recently joined Gentex, the responsibility to reconfigure operations fell on his shoulders.

"We had to scramble goods that were in shipments from the U.S. to Germany," he recalls.

Mother Nature disrupted his supply chain once again in 2011 when a 9.1 earthquake struck off the coast of Japan, triggering a catastrophic tsunami.

"Our suppliers were devastated, but when you have a globally connected supply base, you cannot sleep. There may be some event that may impact you," says Matthews.

In addition to facilities in Germany, Japan and China, Gentex

maintains research and development and manufacturing sites in Zeeland, MI. Its high-tech electronic products are used by original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) in several industries. In the automotive sector, for example, carmakers utilize Gentex's electronic automatic-dimming mirrors to enhance safety and driver confidence.

Prior to joining the Gentex team, Matthews worked with General Motors and Delphi Delco. He also held positions with Whirlpool and a small consulting firm. Although he began as a manufacturing process engineer, Matthews, now a vice president of purchasing, seized upon an opportunity to follow a mentor into the business side. It was a chance to change career lanes, but stay within the automotive industry.

"The automotive industry allows you to experience different cultures, changing content, and people. With purchasing, you're dealing with people, strategies and money," he explains.

Among other duties, Matthews oversees material purchases, including both direct and indirect resources. And, as noted earlier, he regularly makes international purchases and must account for shipping procedures and schedules. Therefore, he's compelled to stay aware of not just weather conditions and how they could detour plans, but also political and economic forecasts.

"You have to be globally aware of what's going on in the industry. You have to be deliberate and judicious when deciding what customers to do business with in other countries," he advises.

"You also have to look at it from a sustainability perspective, such as [international directives] on conflict minerals. We have to understand the supply base."

From this perch, Matthews has a unique view from which to assess routes the industry is currently following, as well as where it's heading. For example, he anticipates a greater use of the Internet of Things (IoT).

"At Gentex we already interface automobiles with home automation, and I can foresee biometric options where you don't have to do a transaction to put gas in the vehicle; you just do an iris scan," suggests Matthews.

Another development he's watching is the tightening job market. In a similar vein, he and fellow executives are committed to identifying diverse leaders who will support the company's continued growth.

"With different perspectives, you can put together a clear view of where to go," he adds.

Unfortunately, Matthews can't predict when Mother Nature will throw the next wrench into his carefully calculated purchasing plans, but he's willing to predict Gentex and the industry are positioned to weather any storm.

Shift your career into high gear by checking out jobs with Gentex at gentex.com/careers/index.html. Map out company happenings on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram.



Matthews is vice president of purchasing at Gentex.

WANG TEAMS WITH CHASSIS BRAKES INTERNATIONAL

Wu Wang, Ph.D., PE didn't speed into a career within the manufacturing sector, much less within the auto industry. Rather, his plan was to immigrate to the U.S. as a graduate student, and upon completion of his doctorate, resume his teaching career, given that while living in China, Wang had been an instructor at the university level.

Thus, he chased professor positions; however, Wang realized the odds of landing a full-time job would improve if he entertained employment opportunities in industry, too.

"One day I received an offer from a German automotive company, and I decided to try working in industry and then go back to academia. After one or two years, though, I found out I could make a real contribution," he recalls. "Now I've been in the industry almost 20 years."

Most recently, Wang has worked with Chassis Brakes International as senior program manager.

In the two decades since Wang accepted his first automotive-related job, there have been significant changes implemented to designs. He's also witnessed the further globalization of the industry. "There are no more regional programs. To be a supplier you have to be global and have a global team," he notes.

But Wang enjoys that international element. "My job as a senior program manager and global program manager means I need to deal with six or seven Ford Motor Company facilities all over the world. I'm very happy to be in this position because I'm meeting with colleagues in different countries, such as China, Europe and Mexico," he says.

With U.S. headquarters in Farmington Hills, MI, Chassis Brakes International is one of the largest manufacturers of braking solutions for passenger cars and light commercial trucks. It hosts more than a dozen production facilities and several engineering sales offices in Europe, Asia, South Africa, and North and South America.

Although Wang considers an internationally diverse workforce an asset, communicating with so many locations and people with different languages and cultural mindsets presents unique challenges. Then there are non-industry issues to consider, not the least of which are geopolitical decisions.

One industry characteristic that hasn't changed much over the duration of Wang's career is the collaborative environment among engineers, other technical specialists and various business units.

"People need to be good working with others. You're never able to work just for yourself," he advises. "You have to be prepared to work with different people in this industry."

Shift your career into high gear by checking out jobs with Chassis Brakes International at chassisbrakes.com/hit-the-road-apply. Map out company happenings on LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.



Wu Wang, Ph.D., PE is a senior program manager with Chassis Brakes International.

Vets Get Technical

VETERANS AND ORGANIZATIONS SHOW HOW TECH TALENT AND MILITARY EXPERTISE GO HAND IN HAND.

Military expertise is increasingly recruited by companies and federal agencies alike, but, it seems, the technical talents of veterans don't seem to be matching up as easily, according to Karen Ross, CEO of New York, NY-headquartered Sharp Decisions, sharpdecisions.com.

"Veterans are the technology sector's most available - but completely ignored - talent resource. They're capable of filling critical technology project gaps throughout every industry in the most efficient ways I've ever seen," asserts Ross.

Ross and Sharp Decisions are now five years into their industry-first veteran training and deployment program aimed at tackling this issue. The Vocation, Education and Training for Service Members (VETS) Program hires, trains and deploys veterans to Sharp Decision's *Fortune* 1,000 clients in areas such as program management, quality assurance, network assessment, business analysis and DevOps, among others.

During the past five years, with the help of their more than two dozen high-profile VETS Program clients across various industries, Ross has helped debunk the theory that veterans don't have the requisite skill set, are unable to handle the rigors and pressures, and aren't up to the task.

Helping veterans shed these misconceptions - that they cannot succeed in corporate America - has become a mission for Ross and the company. It's because of this success that Sharp Decisions was able to expand its program to include cyber and network infrastructure security to commemorate the five-year anniversary of the program a few months ago.

Organizations such as Major League Baseball, Sandia National Laboratories, Tenneco Inc. and G4S Secure Solutions also debunk the notion that veterans cannot succeed in corporate America. Employees such as Ethan Israel, David Torres, Paul Caston and Benjamin Gutierrez are proof-positive that success in the military can well carry over to the business world. Read their stories here.

BY BARBARA WOODWORTH



Sandia National Laboratories' David Torres praises - and continues to work with - the lab's Wounded Warrior Career Development Program that he credits with fostering his entrance into the civilian job sector. The U.S. Army veteran is now a senior engineering support technologist for Sandia.

TORRES' TECH TALENT SUPPORTS SANDIA'S ENGINEERING ACTIVITIES

As a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC), multi-mission Sandia National Laboratories is operated by National Technology and Engineering Solutions of Sandia LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Honeywell International Inc., as a contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).

Sandia Labs supports numerous federal, state and local government agencies, companies and organizations, and has major research and development responsibilities in nuclear deterrence, global security defense, energy technologies and economic competitiveness.

And, for the past two and a half years, U.S. Army veteran David Torres has been an integral part of the tech team at this Albuquerque, NM-headquartered facility, where he's a senior engineering support technologist. A recipient of a Bachelor of Sci-

ence in technology management from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, he's now furthering his education by studying for a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering at the University of New Mexico.

"At Sandia I'm excited to be part of a fast-paced sector that's extremely rewarding."

While in the Army, Torres was an AH-64 armament/electrical/avionic systems repair sergeant and worked as a subject matter expert. While his military duties differed from his current civilian responsibilities, his transition to his current career field was made pos-

sible via Sandia's Wounded Warrior Career Development Program (WWCDP), where he received training and mentorship as an engineering support technologist.

Now working on the computer side of Sandia, Torres works in cybersecurity focusing on hardware security. Introduced to the hardware side of computer technology and electrical engineering, he says his desire to become an engineer was buoyed by his work on the engineering designs of Apache helicopters.

"I chose Sandia because of the WWCDP and the opportunity to earn my engineering degree on a part-time basis at an organization that allows for flexible work hours," he states.

Today Torres' duties involve facilitating operations for scientific research and development research testing at several labs. In this capacity he's responsible for conducting electrical and software circuit analysis experiments, as well as developing tests in hardware descriptive languages for use by engineers on field programmable gate arrays.

Torres operates on the philosophy that if he's not challenged by his work, then he's wasting his time. This isn't the case at Sandia.

"At Sandia I'm excited to be part of a fast-paced sector that's extremely rewarding," he notes. "As technology advances, so do the challenges. Working for a national laboratory allows me to be surrounded by others who are the best in their fields - a good fit for a lab that has, for more than 60 years, delivered essential science and technology designed to resolve our nation's most challenging security issues."

As for the skills he identifies as vitally important, Torres cites determination, tenacity, patience and an affinity for the technical aspects of the job. What he most enjoys about his work are the challenges it presents.

"The most satisfying part is seeing results after putting something together," remarks Torres, who's still a member of WWCDP where he mentors newly hired veterans and serves as a guest speaker at events sponsored by Sandia's Military Support Committee.

For service members newly transitioning to the civilian sector, he stresses the many opportunities that are available for veterans who are persistent and determined to excel.

For more information about Sandia National Laboratories, check out sandia.gov, sandia.gov/careers, Twitter, Facebook, DVIDS, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Giphy, Google+ and the company's RSS feed.

MLB'S ISRAEL SHARES HIS TECH TALENT WITH AMERICA'S NATIONAL PASTIME

Having participated in the VETS training program at Sharp Decisions, Ethan Israel, like many veterans, credits the military with providing opportunities to both experience leadership roles and work with diverse groups of individuals toward a common goal. And, it is with those acquired skills, that he's been able to carve out a great career for himself in the IT world.

"The six years I spent in the Army National Guard have been



MLB's Ethan Israel enjoys contributing his tech talents as a team leader of three software testers and military acumen as a veteran of the U.S. Army National Guard to a sport he loves.

"I believe companies have to realize how much of an untapped resource veterans are."

invaluable in my current career at Major League Baseball (MLB) as a senior test engineer," Israel says.

Israel's current work with New York, NY-headquartered Major League Baseball Advanced Media, MLB's digital arm, includes leading a team of three software testers who plan, implement, and execute manual and automated testing of several enterprise applications that assist in the operation of the 30-team MLB, the oldest of the four major professional sports leagues in North America.

"Although it was something I studied a bit in college, I did not take a serious interest in IT until I participated in the Sharp Decisions VETS training program," says Israel. "It was through this program that I acquired five years of industry experience in software testing that resulted in a consultant position at MLB. Two years later, I was hired full time."

According to Israel, IT is a sector with tremendous growth potential, especially as technology becomes an ever-bigger part of our lives.

"In the future I see this trend continuing - even exponentially - with big advancements made in automation that will change the

industry and lead to even more opportunities for skilled individuals with a passion for innovation,” he believes.

If you ask Israel, however, his response would be that U.S. veterans could very well be the future of the industry.

“I believe companies have to realize how much of an untapped resource veterans are,” he states, stressing the need for companies to be willing to take a chance, and invest in training and entry-level opportunities for those who may or may not have relevant experience from their time in service.

Additionally, increasing awareness among veterans in all programs and incentives that already exist would be a huge help. “If it was not for companies like Sharp Decisions taking a chance on me, and so many other veterans, I would not be in my position today,” Israel points out.

Israel further asserts that it’s also about more than getting a chance. Those able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and self-motivate to achieve goals they set for themselves can find significant success in the IT sector.

“This is actually something the military does a great job of teaching, and I advise veterans to know that even if their service time did not involve a lot of technology work, they still have acquired skills that are invaluable to an IT career,” counsels Israel, who finds it highly rewarding to be a contributing member of a great team of people.

For more information about MLB, visit mlb.com, mlb.mlb.com/careers/index.jsp and social media sites including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Google+.

TENNECO'S CASTON LEADS & ENCOURAGES FELLOW VETS IN THEIR CIVILIAN CAREER PURSUIT

With academic and professional experience that includes a Bachelor of Science in computer engineering from the University of Illinois at Chicago, 25 years in IT and nine years in the Illinois Army National Guard culminating with the rank of Sergeant E5, Paul Caston is well-suited for his role as IT director, global infrastructure and operations, enterprise business systems at Lake Forest, IL-headquartered Tenneco Inc.

Caston describes how the military prepared him for his job at Tenneco, a diversified global employer of a 32,000-employee workforce and a global manufacturer of ride performance and clean air products, and tech solutions for light vehicles, commercial trucks, off-highway equipment and the aftermarket.

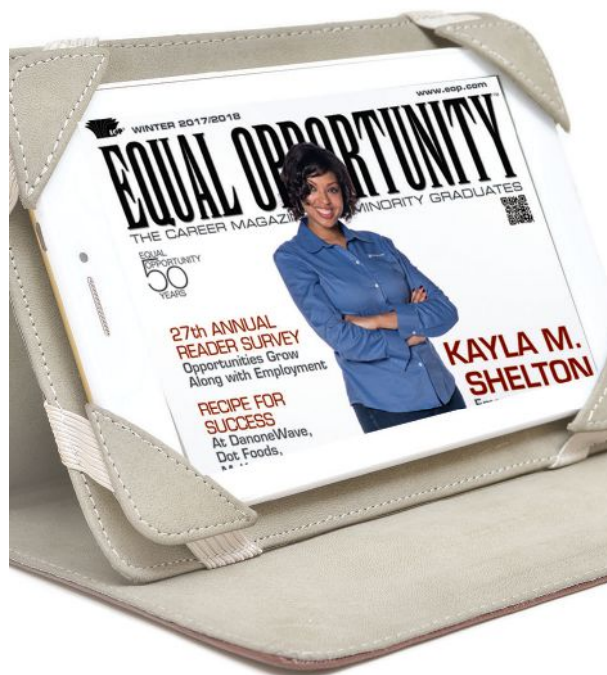
“Keeping up with **technology**
is imperative
for both **leadership** and customers.”

“During my time with the military, I was charged with leading and providing support to different people from different backgrounds, providing support to infantry, as well as being deployed nationally to address local disaster recovery. This experience provided outstanding preparation for my current job in the civilian sector,” he states.

As for what drew him to the IT/computing industry, Caston credits his early interest in math.

“I got my first dose of computers in grade school, and it stuck with

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An Illinois Army National Guard veteran that achieved the rank of Sergeant E5 and the IT director, global infrastructure and operations, enterprise business systems for Tenneco Inc., Paul Caston hosts global infrastructure services and data center strategy. He also provides leadership and direction while encouraging fellow vets to pursue civilian careers within their areas of interest, especially in IT.

me all the way through college and into my career,” Caston details.

“Eight and a half years ago, after working in managing consulting and banking IT for several years, my love of technology led me to Tenneco. I felt a need to move to a more traditional and global, infrastructure leadership role.”

In his present capacity Caston is responsible for hosting global infrastructure services and data center strategy, which includes servers, databases, storage, backup and disaster recovery.

His take on careers in the IT/computing industry in all sectors is positive. “There are many opportunities. Within the automotive arena, as with all businesses intent on modernizing and increasing cost-effectiveness, keeping up with technology is imperative for both leadership and customers,” he maintains.

With this in mind Caston encourages veterans with an interest in IT and computing to pursue careers in those fields.

“Not only will such veterans have the full support of the military, they’ll also have the advantage of participating in challenging and fulfilling careers,” he points out, identifying excellent communication, organization, planning and solid technical skills as important attributes.

At Tenneco Caston particularly enjoys being able to provide leadership and direction to a global organization. Outside of work, he remains a long-term community volunteer dedicated to helping children increase their self-confidence through sports.

For more information about Tenneco, visit tenneco.com and tenneco.com/careers, and the company’s LinkedIn and Twitter pages.

GUTIERREZ LEADS TECH TEAM SUPPORTING NORTH AMERICAN G4S BUSINESS UNITS

With automation totaling 90% of his job during his 15 years in the U.S. Army, Benjamin Gutierrez took advantage of the opportunity to complete his Microsoft certification while in the service. “This was a military requirement for those with the rank of SSG/E6, 56 NCOIC and HQ PLT. SGT,” says Gutierrez, who served three tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan, and is now IT team leader at G4S Secure Solutions, which has North American headquarters in Jupiter, FL with offices throughout the country and the world.

For Gutierrez, working with computers was always an interest, but it was in the military that his full potential was reached in this field.

“Upon retiring from the service, many job opportunities presented themselves, given my work experience and security clearance,” he reports.

He also credits the many programs and services offered by the military to outgoing personnel that were instrumental in helping him develop a professional career path in civilian life.

After separating from the military, and interviewing with several employers, Gutierrez found that G4S stood out as his employer of choice.

“G4S is not only recognized as a company that takes pride in hir-



As an IT manager, Benjamin Gutierrez, who is also a veteran of the U.S. Army, leads a tech team that provides support to his business unit and other G4S business units across North America.

ing and retaining veterans, it also offers great opportunities for advancement. For me, that was a particular appeal," he states.

"Starting as a senior IT support staffer, within eight months I transitioned to my current management position at a company with approximately 60,000 employees."

Now in his third year, Gutierrez is on board with his company's goal of securing people, property and assets by mitigating security risks and delivering innovative solutions that span an entire organization.

Charged with providing support within his business unit and other G4S organizations across North America, Gutierrez's team

of nine highly motivated and knowledgeable individuals run a trouble ticketing system for all IT-related issues.

"We manage everything from account creations for our domain and email accounts, computer imaging processes and inventory that includes management of all licensed software. Our help desk is available 24/7 to deal with any problems that may arise from hardware issues to software applications to basic know-how instructions," remarks the IT manager.

According to Gutierrez, the IT arena is ever-changing with new technological breakthroughs occurring constantly. "Updating one's knowledge is both essential and a requirement for all businesses that expect to grow," he contends.

Recommending that soldiers take advantage of the free IT/computing training and experience offered by the military, he notes how "the potential for high-demand careers within the civilian sector is immense."

He additionally mentions that the IT/computing sector often requires prior experience beyond entry-level, and that individuals well-versed in several areas are sought as opposed to those who focus on one specific space.

"Veterans have a clear advantage in the hiring process as they possess significant knowledge, skill sets, experience and expertise that provide an abundant amount of resources in the transition from military to civilian life," says Gutierrez, who finds G4S a great company for which to work, who thoroughly enjoys the challenges of his profession, and who adds, "Army Strong - Hooah!"

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