U.S. ARMY VETERAN
Jon Tournier
Ensures Semiconductor Equipment Tool Quality At Lam Research

Wounded Warriors
Find Sure Footing In Civilian Careers

Military Expertise Valued in STEM Fields

Corporate America Seeks Armed Forces Acumen

Positive Prospects in Federal Government

Veterans Leverage Education Resources for Success
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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?

Peace Corps.
Life is calling. How far will you go?
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STEM in Demand

STEM skills are highly valued and actively recruited in the private and public sectors, making a career in the STEM fields a solid bet for veterans and non-veterans alike. Gain insight from those already working in STEM, and see a snapshot of STEM’s on-going growth here.

By Sandra H. Shichtman

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Wounded Warriors Find Sure Career Footing

The discipline and stamina of U.S. veterans makes them stellar employees at companies with a solid global presence. The wounded warriors featured here exemplify how veterans can leverage their military expertise and find sure footing in the civilian sector as companies recognize their value and the veteran unemployment rate ticks lower.

By Rachel Sokol

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Prioritizing Veteran Hires

Corporate leaders prioritize the hiring of veterans, recognizing the valuable skill set they bring to the civilian workforce. See what the four top companies and leaders in military and veteran recruiting highlighted here are doing to bring more veterans into their fold.

By Barbara Woodworth

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Committed to Service

The federal government offers a massive and growing array of career opportunities, with employment expected to rise within the next year. Here seven individuals committed to service discuss their positions within the government, and share what makes their agencies great places to work.

By Amanda N. Wegner

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On page 16 learn how Jon Tournier, a U.S. Army veteran, has made the successful transition to civilian success as a production test technician at Lam Research, where he’s final test lead for one of Lam’s semiconductor equipment tools and ensures product quality before shipment.

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EDITOR’S NOTE

Veterans Rock

A 2018 U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) report indicated veteran unemployment hit an all-time low of 3.5%.

And most recently, in May 2019, the veteran unemployment rate ticked down to 2.7% from 3.4% in May 2018. This represents the lowest veteran unemployment rate in the month of May since 2000, according to the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

This positive veteran unemployment news is a result of the commitment of our nation to our veterans, and these numbers should be celebrated. However, according to Colonel Matthew F. Amidon, USMCR, director of the military service initiative at the George W. Bush Institute, our mission isn’t complete.

“Sustainment should now be the focus with our sights set on meaningful career pathways for veterans and their families. When we fully leverage their continued leadership, we all benefit,” he writes in a blog post for the Institute.

Businesses have the power to change this, and myriad organizations in public and private sectors have made tremendous strides and commitments to hiring, retaining, and promoting veterans at all levels. They increasingly recognize the tremendous, battle-born skill sets they bring to the workplace.

In short, leaders in the private and public sectors know veterans rock. Veterans bring such sought-after skills as leadership, teamwork, grit, dedication and perseverance.

As Mike Pett, Accenture’s North America military recruitment lead, puts it: “Known for a robust work ethic, commitment to excellence, attention to detail and ability to succeed in challenging environments, veterans exemplify many of the same core values that Accenture lives by.”

Accenture, along with Burns & McDonnell, Ryder and Brown-Forman, all actively seek veterans to bring into the fold of their businesses. Learn in this issue on page 32 what initiatives the leaders from these four top companies have put forth to grow the number of vets in their workforce ranks.

In this special veterans edition we also shine the spotlight on wounded warriors who have found sure career footing in their post-military careers. Discover what drives the four veterans featured on page 26, and learn from them how they parlayed their military expertise into successful civilian careers.

Next turn to page 16 where you can see where in-demand STEM skills and in-demand veterans’ skills intersect for a win-win in the workplace. And meet several vets who can attest to that. As Jon Tournier, a veteran of the U.S. Army who has PTSD, puts it: “The focus that you learn in the military is valuable and extremely useful in the civilian workplace.”

Indeed, Tournier, who graces our cover, applies his focus as a production test technician at Lam Research, where he’s currently a final test lead for one of Lam’s semiconductor equipment tools.

Learn more about him and the others in this feature before turning to page 38 to meet a mix of several veterans and non-veterans who’ve forged fulfilling career paths working for the federal government.

On page 8 find myriad resources for vets along with a veterans employment toolkit from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). On page 12 find educational resources for obtaining a post-military MBA. And on page 14 read about one veteran entrepreneur highlighted by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

In addition, don’t forget to follow us @EOPublications on Twitter and Facebook, and on EOP’s website, eop.com, to access our Diversity and Inclusion Career Center.

And don’t forget to register for free for CAREERS & the disABLED’s upcoming Career Expo and EOP’s upcoming STEM Diversity Career Expo in 2019 while you’re there.

In fact, join us for the next CAREERS & the disABLED’s Career Expo, which is July 11, 2019 in Washington, DC at the Ronald Reagan Building. Attendees can register for free at eop.com/expo.

Don’t miss it, as it’s your chance to get crucial face time with top Fortune 500 companies and large federal government agencies seeking talent to fill available positions! Happy job hunting!

Barbara Capella Loehr      bloehr@eop.com
As a leading supplier of semiconductor manufacturing equipment and services, Lam Research develops innovative solutions that enable chipmakers to build smaller, faster, and better performing electronic devices — helping shape the future of technology.

At Lam, our vision is for every person to feel valued, included, and empowered to achieve their full potential. By bringing unique individuals and viewpoints together, we achieve extraordinary results. Learn more about how you can make an impact at lamresearch.com/careers.
Key Job Resources For Veterans

Veterans seeking to transition from military to civilian careers can find a wealth of information and help online. **Those resources include the following:**

**ApprenticeshipUSA**

*dol.gov/OA/veterans.cfm*

Supported by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Provides details to veterans about registered apprenticeship.

**DOL, CareerOneStop**

*careeronestop.org/Veterans/default.aspx*

Sponsored by DOL and is a partner of the American Job Center Network. Helps veterans explore career options, locate training and find jobs.

**Feds Hire Vets**

*fedshirevets.gov*

Operated by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (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.

**The Gold Card Initiative**

*dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html*

Joint effort of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS). Provides unemployed, post-9/11-era veterans with the follow-up services they need to succeed in today’s job market.

**Hire Heroes USA**

*hireheroesusa.org*

Founded by John Bardis as a non-profit organization that empowers U.S. military members, veterans and military spouses to succeed in the civilian workforce. Works to transform military service into civilian successes via personalized career preparation alongside resources for interested employers.

**Hiring Our Heroes**

*hiringourheroes.org*

Supported by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Connects veterans, service members and military spouses with meaningful employment opportunities.

**My Next Move for Veterans**

*mynextmove.org/vets*

Sponsored by ETA and DOL, and developed by the National Center for O*NET Development. Offers an interactive tool to help vets learn about career options.
**USAJOBS**

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

*Run by OPM.*

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

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**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

*va.gov*

*Run by the U.S. government.*

Offers myriad resources and essential information for veterans.

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**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.

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**Veterans Employment Center (VEC)**

*vets.gov/employment*

*Supported by VA.*

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

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**Veterans.Gov**

*veterans.gov*

*Supported by DOL.*

Offers employment resources for veterans.

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**Veterans Jobs Mission**

*veteranjobsmission.com*

Partnered with Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University (IVMF). Began in 2011 as the 100,000 Jobs Mission with 11 leading companies committed to hiring 100,000 veterans by 2020, and evolved to 200-plus leading member companies that represent virtually every industry in the U.S. economy. Renamed the Veteran Jobs Mission and collectively hired 450,000-plus veterans.

Offers class-leading programs in career, vocational, and entrepreneurship education and training, and provides service members, veterans, and their families with the skills needed to be successful in education, work, and life.

---

**Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), Warriors to Work**

*woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/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.

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**Essential Employment Toolkit for Post-Military Careers**

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 an 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 for workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.


• 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 U.S. Department of Defense program that helps eligible military personnel begin new careers as teachers in public schools.

• Helmers 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 military training to excel in the business world.

• DOL’s My Next Move: It’s a website that offers more information 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.
Defining a 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? 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 servicemen 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 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 completed 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.”

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- Systems Engineering
- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- Information Systems
- Physics
- Materials Science
- Business Applications
- Aerospace Engineering

Equal opportunity employer/Disability/Vet/GIBR

SAND2016-4685 IMR
Top Online MBA Programs for Vets

These are the best online master’s programs in business administration that help veterans reduce the cost of school:

Indiana University, Bloomington (Kelley)
Bloomington, IN

Carnegie Mellon University (Tepper)
Pittsburgh, PA

Arizona State University (Carey)
Phoenix, AZ

University of Maryland, College Park (Smith)
College Park, MD

Auburn University (Harbert)
Auburn, AL

Pennsylvania State University, World Campus
University Park, PA

University of Wisconsin MBA Consortium
Eau Claire, WI (TIE)

Washington State University
Pullman, WA

Creighton University
Omaha, NE

North Carolina State University (Poole)
Raleigh, NC

University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Isenberg)
Amherst, MA

University of Utah (Eccles)
Salt Lake City, UT

How to Earn a Post-Military MBA

Military members and veterans represent one of the fastest-growing groups of new college students. The number of veterans going to college rose 67% from 564,487 students in 2009 (when the Post-9/11 GI Bill came to fruition) to 945,052 in 2012 (the latest year for which data is available).

Of that number, 48% are in undergraduate programs and 32% in graduate school. The remaining are in doctoral, certification or licensure programs.

And while earning a bachelor’s degree is a great first step, earning a master’s degree has fast become the gold standard for advanced careers.

Today many MBA programs don’t focus on leadership. Instead they concentrate on business strategy: how to identify issues and analyze problems, and how to create and present recommendations to solve found issues. But that’s only half of the equation.

The other half is the execution of the recommendations, and that usually involves working with people at some point in the process.

Military experience teaches you how to execute on plans and hones leadership skills, so veterans with MBAs are the whole package.

For service members and veterans ready to learn at the graduate level, the many military-learned skills match very well to a number of popular master’s degrees:

- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Business for Veterans (MBV)
- Master of Education (M.Ed.)
• Master of Public Policy (MPP)
• Master in Management (MiM)
• Master of Science in Leadership (MSL)
• Professional Science Master’s (PSM) Programs, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
• Master of Arts
• Master in Science

Funding a master’s degree is expensive, but there are resources available. For example, many service members are now coming out of the military with at least two GI Bills - usually the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) and Post-9/11 GI Bill. By exhausting their MGIB entitlement first and then switching over to the Post-9/11 GI Bill, veterans can get up to 48 months of education benefits - enough to fund a four-year degree and at least part of a master’s degree.

While serving, most of the military branches offer TA to their members. By taking full advantage of this benefit, military members can earn a four-year degree while on active duty, thus preserving more of their GI Bill benefits to fund a graduate degree.

More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at benefits.va.gov/gibill.

Even with tuition assistance, Top-Up and the GI Bill, additional funding is usually needed to help pay the tuition costs of a master’s degree. Fortunately, there are myriad scholarships available that don’t require payback.

Listed below is a small sampling of scholarships available to military and veteran students seeking funding for a master’s degree:

• AFCEA Educational Fund, afcea.org/site/?q=foundation/scholarships
• Colorado State University Global Campus U.S. Military Active Duty/Veteran Master’s Degree Scholarship, csuglobal.edu/cost/tuition
• Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association, la-fra.org
• Pat Tillman Foundation, pattillmanfoundation.org
• The Graduate Incentive Scholarship (GIS) Program, scholarships.college toolkit.com/scholarships/awards/graduate_incentive_scholarship/1015.aspx

Besides the GI Bills and scholarships, there are also federally backed loans, grants, work-study programs, fellowships and assistantships. Loans should be used as a last resort as they require payback once out in the workforce. It’s a daunting feeling coming out of school already burdened with debt.
SBA Spotlights a Small Business Success Story

As a service-disabled veteran entrepreneur, Martha Daniel has grown Information Management Resources, Inc. (IMRI), which she founded in 1992, into a profitable business through her leadership and assistance from programs offered by U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), according to the Washington, DC-based agency that spotlighted her small business success story in a recent eNewsletter.

IMRI, imri.com, is an industry-leading provider of cybersecurity, technology, program management, and engineering services for government organizations and commercial enterprises.

IMRI is a change integrator that leverages its nearly 27 years of highly specialized, data-center expertise to provide its clients with integrated, solution-based programs to help them meet the requirements and challenges of an ever-changing business environment. Working with some of the largest organizations and networks in the world, IMRI operates in 19 states, providing its clients a critical combination of corporate experience, localized expertise, and proven methodologies and tools that integrate seamlessly into any enterprise.

“Today the company employs more than 155 people worldwide, specializing in cybersecurity, engineering, technology and program management. A true advocate for change, Martha also contributes her time and resources to various community organizations,” notes SBA on Instagram.

“During #BlackHistoryMonth, SBA honors the valuable contributions African Americans like Martha make to our economy and communities. #smallbusiness #entrepreneur #empowersmallbiz #veteran,” SBA adds on its Instagram post highlighting her success, instagram.com/p/BuKECjlgxjr.

Martha Daniels (second from r) is a service-disabled veteran entrepreneur who has grown Information Management Resources, Inc. (IMRI) - which she founded in 1992 - into a profitable business.
The Air Force Reserve offers a variety of part-time job opportunities with full-time benefits, including tuition assistance and low-cost health insurance. You may be eligible for a signing bonus of up to $20,000 for specific part-time jobs.

Serving your country part-time in the Air Force Reserve at a base close to where you live gives you the opportunity to also pursue your civilian career or further your education. It’s an ideal option for those who have never been in the military as well as for those with prior military service in any branch.
STEM IN DEMAND

STEM skills are highly valued and actively recruited in the private and public sectors.

Both corporate America and organizations in the public sector understand the value of hiring veterans. They’re disciplined team players with leadership skills and a strong work ethic. Plus, for veterans with service-connected disabilities who need them, these organizations are providing reasonable accommodations to assure they’re successful in their post-military careers.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) report shows that, in 2018, there were 19.2 million veterans, which accounts for about 8% of the men and women older than the age of 18 in the civilian population. The report goes on to say that, in August 2018, while one in five employed veterans who had no service-connected disabilities worked in jobs in the public sector, it employed one in three veterans with service-connected disabilities.

But organizations in all sectors of the economy have been hiring and promoting veterans. The five veterans featured here - who all work in the private sector - are having successful post-military careers in STEM disciplines, which are the top-paid and most in-demand job sectors skill sets now.

Army Vet Tournier Ensures Product Quality at Lam Research

LAM RESEARCH, headquarted in FREMONT, CA designs, manufactures, markets, and services equipment used by semiconductor companies to create advanced chips in products from smartphones and laptops to cars and medical devices.

Jon Tournier, who transitioned out of the U.S. Army in May 2012 as a specialist E-4, is a production test technician at Lam.

“I was recruited from a job site where I posted my resume,” he says. However, based on his own research, Tournier, who is also working on a bachelor’s degree in applied mathematics, learned that Lam actively supported hiring veterans. Lam also has an active veterans’ group.

Tournier came on board at Lam as an assembler, where he built semiconductor equipment manufacturing tools. He was promoted into his present position as a production test technician.

“I’m currently a final test lead for one of Lam’s semiconductor equipment tools,” he details. “I test and troubleshoot the tools to ensure the products are defect-free before shipment.”

Because his military career left him with PTSD, Tournier needed an accommodation, which Lam provided.

“I’ve been allowed to leave or take some time [away from Lam] in the past due to my PTSD,” he explains. “I’m sometimes faced with overwhelming anxiety, and I’ve never had any issues [with Lam] if I needed to leave or take some time to calm myself.”

“The focus that you learn in the military is valuable and extremely useful in the civilian workplace,” he assures transitioning veterans, and advises them to find a workplace that’s the right fit for them.

One of the challenges they might face in the civilian workplace is how they relate to colleagues. “How we talk to others in the military is not the same as what is expected in the civilian workplace,” he explains.

He suggests veterans might look into applying for civilian career opportunities via Orion Military Talent programs, or submit their resume directly to Lam.

Veterans and non-veterans can visit lamresearch.com/careers for career opportunities. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram.

By SANDRA H. SHICHTMAN
Peter (Gary) O’Rourke came to Harris Corporation—where he’s now a senior specialist in electronic systems—after serving a tour of duty with the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970.

He’s been awarded a Purple Heart and is rated permanently disabled. Leaving the military with the rank of sergeant in 1971, he came on board at Harris after speaking with a company employee, and learning about the company’s efforts to recruit and hire veterans.

O’Rourke is a configuration control specialist with the Melbourne, FL-based company that provides mission-critical solutions in tactical communications, electronic warfare, avionics, air traffic management, space and intelligence and weather systems to its commercial and government customers.

“This is a rewarding position that establishes baselines and analyzes proposed product design changes to determine their effects within an overall system,” he explains. The work Harris does, he adds, is well-aligned to those who have served their country.

Since, as previously noted, O’Rourke is the recipient of a Purple Heart and is rated permanently disabled, he requires on-going medical care. “Harris has been very understanding and supportive, giving

Jon Tournier, a veteran of the U.S. Army who has PTSD, is a production test technician at Lam, where he’s currently a final test lead for one of Lam’s semiconductor equipment tools.
me time off when I need to visit the VA hospital for treatments, labs and tests,” he notes.

He has this advice for transitioning veterans: “Find a career and a workplace that will give you the same feeling of accomplishment, pride and camaraderie you had during your time in the military and will not compromise the values you held during that time.”

He also urges them to look for an organization that values their military service and commitment to country. The company’s SERVE employee resource group helps onboard and connect veterans and emergency responders within the Harris community.

One of the challenges they’ll find in transitioning to the civilian workplace is in relating to non-veteran coworkers, according to O’Rourke.

“As a combat veteran,” he explains, “I found that difficult after returning from my tour in Vietnam. My advice is to be understanding of your new coworkers. You can also seek out your brother and sister veterans, join a veterans’ organization related to your unit and attend their reunions.”

Veterans and non-veterans can visit careers.harris.com to learn about open positions. Connect on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.


STEM BY THE NUMBERS

- Employment in occupations related to STEM is projected to grow to more than 9 million by 2022. The top-paid 2019 graduates are once again expected to earn engineering ($69,188), computer science ($67,539), and math and sciences degrees ($62,177).
- Data scientist is the number-one, in-demand job. Right there with it is software developer, with a median salary of $100,080.
- Employment for chemical engineers and environmental engineers will increase by 8% by 2026.
- Employment in healthcare IT and informatics will increase 20% by 2026.
- Employment of aerospace engineers will grow 6% by 2026.
- Overall employment of electrical engineers will grow 7% by 2026, with the median annual wage being $96,640.
- Women now represent 24% of the cybersecurity workforce.
- U.S. employers posted an estimated 313,735 job openings for cybersecurity workers between September 2017 and August 2018. That’s in addition to the 715,000-plus, currently employed cybersecurity workers and IT professionals heavily focused on security.
- About half (48%) of business respondents in Deloitte’s 2019 Renewable Energy Industry Outlook are working to procure more electricity from renewable sources, which means the energy sector is poised to remain steady well into the foreseeable future, with a constant demand for STEM jobs that will evolve as energy consumption does.
- Close to Washington, DC, California-Lexington Park, MD emerged as the city with the highest share of high-tech jobs in its local economy in the U.S., followed by San Jose/Silicon Valley, CA and then Huntsville, AL and Boulder, CO.
- The U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) 2018 total federal jobs estimate is 2,797,000.
- The total number of U.S. active duty and National Guard/reserve forces in 2018 is reported at 2,148,392. For 2017 that number is reported at 2,320,202.
- For 2018 the number of veterans is reported at 19.2 million.
Johnson’s Post-Military Career Soars at Caterpillar Inc.

Having achieved the rank of lieutenant in the Civil Engineer Corps of the U.S. Navy, Jerry L. Johnson transitioned out in March 2008. He says his father-in-law’s 39 years at a Caterpillar dealership was a factor in his coming aboard at the company.

Headquartered in Deerfield, IL, Caterpillar Inc. is the world’s leading manufacturer of construction and mining equipment, diesel and natural gas engines, industrial gas turbines, and diesel-electric locomotives.

Johnson is a mechanical engineer. He explains that he chose that STEM discipline “as it relates to procurement and acquisition,” so he could plan, organize, and problem-solve. Plus, “his willingness to tackle complex cross-functional relationships between engineering solutions and economic outcomes” was also instrumental in his making that choice.

Today he’s a procurement manager, and leads a cost-reduction team that specializes in RPM methodology and addresses supplier’s materials, processes, rates, and demand while improving quality and delivery metrics.

He’s also been a Six Sigma Black Belt who managed a cylinder block and headed a special project, a platform supervisor who managed procurement professionals and purchasing projects, a project manager, a segment buyer managing global sourcing strategy for a Caterpillar division, and a supply network engineer who managed an indirect cost-reduction initiative.

Johnson believes his military training and experiences have enabled him to be “a situational thinker, a strong collaborator and...
networker, and a decisive decision-maker with feedback."

They’ve also given him the discipline to execute in a
dynamic climate such as Caterpillar’s work environment, and
to manage conflict from various perspectives with limited
information.

He says there are many skills learned in the military that
transfer to the civilian workplace. They include a strong work
ethic, a drive for results, the discipline to execute, the ability to
work in a team environment, to work under pressure and to
meet deadlines.

He’s a member of the Caterpillar Armed Forces Support
Network, an employee resource group whose mission is to
attract, integrate and develop talent.

“We serve Caterpillar and the communities that we live in
by leveraging our strength of leadership, character, and personal
resolve,” he explains.

Johnson cites some challenges that veterans might experi-
ence as they transition into the civilian workplace. They include
maintaining a work life-balance, communicating with civilian
acronyms and words rather than with military jargon, having
realistic expectations, and obtaining occupational credentials,
such as a license or certification.

Among the pieces of advice he offers is to understand the
landscape of the organization and its products and services, and
align their actions and activities with the organization’s vision,
mission, and common goals.

Further, he recommends, “collaborate and seek opportuni-
ties to problem-solve, build collaborative relationships and bring
diverse individuals together, share your strength, know your
purpose, know your leadership styles, personality styles,
[and] emotional intelligence dimensions, and continuously
work to improve them, and push yourself outside your
comfort zone and experiment with new
ways of achieving success.”

Military STEM Experience Opens
Opportunities for Parker at Merck

In June 2017 Dineen Parker, transitioned from the U.S. Army,
where she’d achieved the rank of sergeant first class. She
became a data scientist at Merck.

Why data science? “I chose this discipline based on a sug-
gestion from my last military supervisor,” she explains.

“In my last military role I was an academic data analyst and
Army/Navy medical laboratory technician instructor. I spent
most of my time on projects analyzing the data of the students
and instructors. I expressed to my supervisor I wanted to get my
master’s degree, but I didn’t know in what. She recommended I
look into data science. I did my research and found that it was a
perfect match for me.”

Dineen Parker, a veteran of the U.S. Army who’s undergone
multiple shoulder surgeries because of an injury she received
while serving her country, is a data scientist at Merck.
She earned that master’s degree to accompany her associate’s degree in clinical laboratory science and her bachelor’s degree in mathematics/natural science.

Why Merck, a global pharmaceutical company headquartered in Kenilworth, NJ? “During my job search, I knew I wanted to work for a company that placed its customers first. After doing my research of companies that hire data scientists in the San Antonio/Austin, TX area, Merck seemed like a perfect fit and met my expectations,” Parker answers.

Merck’s 69,000 employees research, develop, and provide medicines, vaccines, and animal health products that save and improve lives globally.

As a data scientist - her first position at Merck - Parker works on projects that consist of predictive/descriptive modeling analyses and data visualization across multiple platforms.

Because of an injury she received while serving her country, Parker says she’s undergone multiple shoulder surgeries. Merck has provided her with a sit/stand desk and a keyboard tray below her desk, which allow her to work easily.

Parker is the lead for the Austin, TX chapter of Merck’s veterans’ employee business resource group (EBRG) whose purpose is to give back to the veterans in the surrounding area and to support military personnel that are deployed, including Merck employees who serve in the National Guard.

The group has been involved in activities such as a veteran donation drive to support the Austin VA Outpatient Clinic’s Christmas gift program. The Veterans EBRG also sent snacks to a Merck reservist called to active duty to be shared with his unit and with local children in Africa.

According to Parker, one of the biggest challenges a transitioning veteran might face is having flexibility in the civilian workplace, something she has at Merck, where there are fewer rules. “In the military, you have a set schedule, when you need to be at work, or go to lunch, etc., but here at Merck, those rules don’t apply. Getting your work completed overrides the idea of where you sit in your workplace. Merck employees work from laptops, which makes us mobile and flexible. We can work remotely or in the office, and we have flexible work schedules, too.”

She suggests that, if possible, veterans entering or re-entering the civilian workplace ask their manager what to expect during their first week on the job. They might also visit a few days before the first day to see how the new workplace operates. If they worked

“SINCE I WAS IN HEALTHCARE [IN THE MILITARY], I find that military healthcare skills transfer easily into the civilian workplace.”

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MARIHUGH HELPS CUSTOMERS OF ALL ABILITIES NAVIGATE MICROSOFT PRODUCTS

If you need technical support with a Microsoft product, but have a disability and need additional assistance, you could very well cross paths with Sean Marihugh.

Marihugh is an accessibility escalation engineer at Microsoft, where he helps run the company’s disability answer desk team, which provides technical support for customers with disabilities around the world in multiple languages, including American Sign Language (ASL).

“I get to work with a range of products and users, and help engineers understand customer pain points and needs,” he says. Marihugh came to the field, in large part, thanks to his experience with the disabilities, opportunities, internetworking and technology (DO-IT) program at the University of Washington during high school and college.

“It was there, alongside other students with disabilities, I learned about self-advocacy, and the technology to help us succeed in college and careers. Through DO-IT I was exposed to a variety of ways people with disabilities interact with technology, and I was instantly hooked,” he shares.

It was also via DO-IT that Marihugh, who has muscular dystrophy and uses a powerchair, was introduced to Microsoft. The organization took summer field trips to the company, where students met employees who were working on cutting-edge technology that empowers people with disabilities at work, at home and in the community.

“When I had the chance to join our accessibility team, I jumped at it! I’ve been at Microsoft for four years, and I feel really privileged to be here,” he enthuses.

To succeed in the fields of technology and accessibility, Marihugh says it’s critical to be willing to learn from others.

“As someone with a disability, sometimes there’s this expectation that I can speak to the experiences of everyone else with a disability,” he says. “While I strive to learn as much as I can about other people’s experiences, even just the understanding that there are all of these different experiences has helped me immensely.”

The ability to take in and learn from different experiences, he adds, is what makes the Redmond, WA-based tech company a great place to work. “Microsoft also really gets what disability means — it’s not about what’s ‘wrong’ with me, it’s about how unique experience informs who I am and what mindset I bring to work.”

Microsoft also makes it easy and comfortable for individuals with disabilities to get what they need to be successful, according to Marihugh. “We have a centralized accommodation fund, so if I need anything to make me more successful, then it doesn’t come out of my team’s budget or affect a decision to hire or promote. That’s a very real problem many people with disabilities unfortunately face in some industries.”

When navigating the job search, Marihugh offers some important food for thought: “I’ve been told there’s no candidate that meets all criteria for a job. If you meet 75% of the criteria for a role, then you’re already a great candidate and should put yourself out there. If there are any accommodations you’d need to excel the interview or on the job, then you know yourself best! Be prepared to articulate not only what you need, but how it’ll make you more successful than anyone else.”

Find career opportunities with Microsoft at careers.microsoft.com, and connect with the company on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

– Amanda N. Wegner

KLOTZ APPLIES HIS ARMY INTEL EXPERTISE TO DATA SCIENCE AT CITIGROUP

In the 13 years since Matt Klotz was medically discharged from the U.S. Army at the end of 2006 — he had obtained the rank of staff sergeant — he has had a number of military contracting positions before coming to Citigroup (Citi), a multinational investment bank and financial services company with headquarters in New York, NY.

He was hired by Citi in 2014 as a senior data scientist working in data intelligence for anti-money laundering, where he helped develop advanced processes to identify anomalies and patterns of suspicious behavior to deter money laundering. While a soldier, he also completed both a bachelor’s degree in the humanities with a focus on history and psychology and a master’s degree in history.

“In the Army I was trained to be an intelligence analyst, which draws from across the STEM disciplines, including science, technology and applied math. Being an intelligence analyst prepared me for private-sector STEM programs like those in data science at Citi,” he notes.

Today Klotz is a senior intelligence data scientist for Citi’s cyber intelligence center (CIC). Similar to his intelligence role in the military, his current position at Citi falls within the technology discipline, and requires using math and science to think outside the box and provide advanced techniques, tactics, and procedures to help keep Citi and its clients safe. “My focus is on helping to develop mature/advanced data-science processes to defend Citi’s network.”

Although a disabled veteran, Klotz didn’t need any special accommodations from Citi. However, he notes that Citi provides reasonable accommodations that enable employees to best perform in their roles, and this extends to enabling qualified applicants with disabilities to participate in the application process. “If I were medically required to have a standing desk, for example, then Citi would have no issue ordering me one.”

In his first year at Citi, Klotz became a member of its Citi Salutes Network in Tampa, FL and, two years later, its co-chair. Today, while he continues to support the Network, "I’m also working to develop the first Veterans on Wall Street (VOWS) chapter in Tampa. VOWS is a program co-founded by Citi that supports career and business opportunities for veterans in the financial services industry in partnership with our peer institutions."
More than 2,000 veterans and military spouses are currently employed at Citi. Klotz indicates that Citi continues to actively recruit and hire veterans, and works to ensure they have the chance to succeed. The company has also been listed as a best employer for veterans.

The citisalutes.com website highlights Citi’s company-wide initiative to support veterans, service members and their families. In addition, any veteran can email Citi’s veteran recruiting specialist directly at Marvin.McMillian@citi.com with questions or to request additional information, further notes Klotz.

“The most important thing I can say to transitioning soldiers is to find what you love doing and make that your new mission,” he says.

“The number-one challenge I faced was finding what I loved doing,” he adds.

“Another challenge was adapting to new language and communication methods. The military teaches a very structured method for communications and a defined encyclopedia of acronyms for efficient communication. However, the corporate world has its own style of communication, and the same acronyms used in the military can actually mean something completely different, so trying to learn this new language can be challenging.”

You can find additional information about the company and its open positions at careers.citigroup.com. Connect on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Glassdoor and Instagram.

Klotz, a veteran with the U.S. Army, is a senior intelligence data scientist for Citi’s cyber intelligence center (CIC).
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FIND SURE CAREER FOOTING

The discipline and stamina of U.S. veterans both allow them to find sure career footing in the civilian workforce, and make them stellar employees at companies with a solid global presence.

When veterans return home, reunite with family and friends, and enter the job force, it’s an emotional time. Thankfully, there are resources out there to help these veterans find jobs back on U.S. soil.

There are also many private- and public-sector organizations that know veterans possess a determination to succeed, a special “spark” that inspires and motivates companies to grow and innovate.

As Colonel Dan Friend, former senior Army fellow at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management points out, military vets make for solid team players, perform well under pressure, can multitask and follow directions, and aim to accomplish their career, educational, and job goals. Additionally, veterans can handle feedback and are very open to new ideas.

“In adapting to the military life, service members learn early on to set aside their personal interests for the greater good of the team,” says Friend in a blog post for the school.

As such, many companies know the value of vets’ skills, and want to bring them and their armed forces acumen into their business fold. This is evidenced by the annual veteran unemployment rate that declined to 3.5% in 2018, which is the lowest level since 2000, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

The wounded warriors featured on the following pages also exemplify how veterans can leverage their military expertise and find sure footing in the civilian sector.

A Marine Corps Reserves veteran, Jason Dominguez, who’s dealt with the challenges that post-traumatic stress can bring to life as a civilian, is a senior consultant, business program management Nationwide’s Columbus, OH location.

Dominguez Creates a Well-Defined Plan for Nationwide

Ohio native Jason Dominguez’s grandfather was in the Marine Corps Infantry.

“He served as a marksmanship instructor during the Korean War,” recalls Dominguez. “I grew up with the desire to serve my country, and always saw myself joining the Marines someday.”

He served in the Marine Corps Reserves for six years, later earning a Bachelor of Arts in economics from The Ohio State Uni-
Professional Development

Many people follow their passion. I would be better as a trainer, or coach! Ultimately, if we’re met with failure because we’re going against our natural strengths, talents, and abilities, then it will be hard to find true satisfaction in what we do.”

Serving in the military has allowed Dominguez to grow in many ways as a leader and personally. “One of the greatest things I benefited from was having to live and work with a diverse group of people from all walks of life who have different backgrounds and beliefs.”

As a leader, he says the military taught him “what it meant to be accountable and to truly work as an effective team while preferring the group’s needs above my own. In today’s world and through social media, we can often live our days thinking that everything is about us. It isn’t, it never has been, and never will be.”

Dominguez was fortunate to have not sustained any physical injuries while in the military; however, like most combat veterans, he’s dealt with the challenges that post-traumatic stress can bring to life as a civilian.

“But, honestly, it’s not all bad. Because of my experience in combat, I’m wired to function in an environment that requires me to adapt and overcome. However, at the same time, I must be mindful of the need to slow down and not treat everything like a crisis. It’s important to make sure you are not always in combat mode and just going through the motions of life.”

He adds: “Practicing mindfulness has helped me to make sure I’m present in the moment, and I’m examining how what I’m feeling may or may not be real.”

Most of all he must identify the shared value that exists in different areas of the business “to make sure different teams are working toward the same goals, which include, scaling our retail mutual funds business by building client-focused relationships with new advisors in new channels.”

According to Dominguez, higher education is a “great buffer zone” between the military and civilian life, especially since the post-9/11 generation has so many benefits available to us, “you would almost be crazy not to use them.”

However, he stresses, there are also other options. “Some people may find that their time was better spent pursuing a skilled trade or certification at a community college or union. I know plumbers who make more money than I do, and some of them have turned their trade into a business where they’re their own boss with others working for them.”

If you do go to college, advises Dominguez, then do it for you and no one else. “I loved the general education credit classes that I took. Yeah, sure, I may never use what I learned in my western civilization classes in corporate America, but I have a better understanding of the world because of it.”

His degree in economics gave him the foundation that he needed as a congressional staffer, a job he held before Nationwide, and ultimately as a leader in the asset management industry.

“Whatever you choose to focus on, do it for you and because you have a genuine interest in it,” he encourages.

He currently works with veterans who are transitioning to civilian life, as well as non-veterans who are seeking to grow past their current roles.

“Many people follow their passion,” he tells others, “but they aren’t good at how they’ve followed their passion. Learn to play off your strengths. For example, I could love football, but maybe I wasn’t built to be a player. Maybe I would be better as a trainer, or coach! Ultimately, if we’re met with failure because we’re going against our natural strengths, talents and abilities, then it will be hard to find true satisfaction in what we do.”

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For career opportunities at Nationwide, which is headquartered in Columbus, OH, visit nationwide.com/about-us/careers.jsp to view available positions. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Flickr.

HARRIS FLIES THE FRIENDLY SKIES FOR AMERICAN AIRLINES

To simply say Lieutenant Colonel Jason O. Harris is from a military family is an understatement. His grandfather served in the Korean Conflict and Vietnam War. Many of his uncles served in the military, and his mother joined the U.S. Army when Harris was in the first grade.

“She chose to join the Army as they didn’t require her, a single mom at the time, to give up full custody of her three boys,” the now international qualified Airbus 320 pilot, first officer for American Airlines shares.

Growing up, his mother would say to him: “If you’re going to join the military, then join the U.S. Air Force. If you’re going to go in the military, then make sure you become an officer!”

Following in his family’s footsteps, he followed her advice, joined the Air Force (USAF), and was commissioned from the Air Force Academy in 2001.

“My joining the Air Force was merely a byproduct of getting an education. I knew, from all that I had been told growing up in poverty, that if I wanted a chance to change the outcome of my
life, and have a chance to not live in poverty, then education was a key element,” explains the lieutenant colonel, who is originally from East Oakland, CA and currently based in Colorado Springs, CO, not too far from Dallas/Fort Worth, TX airport, the major hub for American Airlines.

“Ultimately, joining the military was a natural first choice on the path toward success for me,” he continues. “It became easy to choose the Air Force over the Army when I began to learn about the technical opportunities - the opportunities to live and work in more office-like environments. In my mind, based on what I had seen growing up, I didn’t want to be working outside, in the elements. I wanted an opportunity to work in an office environment, and the opportunity to utilize my brains over any brawn that I totally did not have!”

He separated from active duty service in March 2013, and earned the following degrees: Bachelor of Science in social sciences, the aforementioned Air Force Academy commission, MBA in International Business (2008), and Master of Science in logistics and supply chain management (2017).

More than five years ago, he was hired as a pilot for American Airlines. “I had flown airplanes my entire career, and it seemed like a natural transition to begin pursuing opportunities to fly commercially.”

During his transition period and prior to separation from active duty service, he “hit every job fair out there for pilots. I even entertained taking jobs that didn’t include flying. It was during this time that I made sure my logbooks, resumes and applications were all up to speed. I hired someone to input my logbooks into a format suitable for an airline interview. I hired two different companies to help me prepare for an airline interview. I paid to attend conferences and job fairs, all in the hopes of landing my dream job at an airline.”

He adds: “I coined all of this time and fees as paying the ‘pilot tax’ to land your dream job, and the last job interview you would ever have!”

And now he gets to “fall in love with something different” about each city each time he visits, but doesn’t have a favorite city to visit when flying the friendly skies.

“This outlook allows me to always have something exciting to look forward to on my travels. Without this attitude, my job could become mundane quite quickly, and I’d forget how to really appreciate the beauty in what I get to do for a living. I get paid to travel the world, experience culture, food and wine. How much better could living get than that?”

When he’s not flying, the USAF veteran mentors youth via a special program called Legacy Flight Academy.

“I’ve sustained trauma and various injuries throughout my career and during my 11 combat deployments and 2,000-plus combat hours,” he further shares. “I’ve received physical therapy treatment for my back, I’ve had a blood clot while on duty, plus other injuries.”

He thinks it’s “the injuries that we can’t see, such as mental trauma, commonly referred to as ‘Post Traumatic Stress,’ that are having a major impact on veterans like myself. I’ve begun to seek opportunities to get help in the form of working out, yoga classes and even professional counseling. I think more veterans are beginning to discover that we’re not alone, and that getting help is actually a significant sign of strength!”

Explore open positions online at jobs.aa.com. Connect with American Airlines via social media on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The company is based in Fort Worth, TX.

“Growing up in a small town in Kentucky, nowhere near the ocean, choosing a career in the U.S. Navy doesn’t seem like an obvious choice,” laughs Brenda Boorda, vice president, mission assurance, Raytheon space and airborne systems and RAYVETS global president.

“However, my father served in the Navy for four years aboard diesel submarines. He always

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Brenda Boorda, who has a disability from the service that limits her physically, is vice president, mission assurance, Raytheon space and airborne systems and RAYVETS global president.
talked fondly about his adventures in the Navy, keeping us mesmerized as young children. So when I graduated from college during a period of recession and job scarcity, I decided to join the Navy - following in his footsteps."

At Raytheon Boorda has the chance “to touch all of our products before they’re sent to the warfighter. We ensure every system works right the first time, every time, and as vice president of mission assurance, I play a large role in maintaining the high quality nature of products that work to keep us safe.”

She takes great pride in supporting her fellow shipmates in their critical missions at home and abroad. “Additionally, my team of dedicated, diverse employees makes coming to work every day an absolute pleasure,” she adds.

According to Boorda, in the military, your exact role and job function are assigned to you via specific orders.

“However, once in the civilian world, finding the next job is entirely up to the individual. My main advice to veterans seeking employment is to develop a strong professional network. Many times in the civilian world, your next job offer will be based on whom you know in a company or specific business sector. Networking is so important and veterans should start making connections, via LinkedIn or through networking events, nine to 12 months in advance of leaving the military,” she advises.

She also believes young veterans should research and become well-versed in the variety of the jobs in which they’re interested. “It’s important to adapt your resume for the role for which you’re applying, which sometimes means creating multiple resumes.”

Many professions don’t require a college degree, Boorda points out, adding: “And I know that college is not the right fit for everyone. However, pursuing a degree while in the military puts veterans in a good position when they leave the service. Some companies, like Raytheon, allow employees to further their education while working. I recommend looking into this option, and researching companies that provide academic support if you want to pursue your degree.”

And, she recommends, if you do go to college, then seek organizations on campus such as Student Veterans of America. “Affiliating with others who have shared experiences and goals is a great development experience, and will help ease the warfighter to civilian transition,” she says.

Boorda currently mentors and sponsors both veterans and non-veterans: “In some cases, Raytheon employees reach out to me to be their mentor, and I provide career and personal guidance on a regular basis. I also work to engage people who I feel have the ability to do more professionally, but who are unaware of their potential or unsure how to proceed with their next career move. In support of this, I participate in face-to-face and virtual mentoring through Raytheon’s partnership with American Corporate Partners and Society of Women Engineers.”

Boorda, who works in the Dallas, TX area, shares that she does have a disability from the service that limits her physically. “Nerve damage in my right shoulder mainly from poor work...
ergonomics, as well as a knee injury as a result of physical training when I was in the Navy,” she details. She has accommodations in her workspace that provide her with a pain-free environment. “I openly discuss my limitations with my team, so they’re aware. It’s extremely important to support our warfighters’ transition back to civilian life - whether it be through career opportunities, providing physical therapy and rehabilitation services, or organizing groups where veterans can discuss their experiences.”

She adds: “All veteran wounds, both physical and mental, must be addressed to ensure continued success and growth in the military community.”

While serving in the Navy, Boorda was able to travel the world and experience other countries and cultures, broadening her appreciation for travel and the intricate workings of human society. “The Navy also gave me the opportunity to lead diverse teams and attend school. The Navy paid for two master’s degrees - computer science and strategy - both of which have helped me excel in my post-military career,” she points out.

Boorda would also recommend the Navy as a career option for those who are “looking to develop leadership and technical skill sets - as well as for those who seek camaraderie, and are looking to build a strong network of peers, mentors, and friends.”

The corporate base for Raytheon is Waltham, MA. Check open positions at Raytheon by visiting jobs.raytheon.com. Connect on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram.

Mendoza Makes a Difference in People’s Lives at Combined Insurance

Given his family’s history, Marcos Mendoza always knew he would serve his country like much of the rest of his family has. “My family has deep military roots. In fact, in my family, we represent almost every branch of service in the U.S. military, starting with both of my grandfathers who both served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War,” shares Mendoza.

“I just didn’t know in what capacity [I’d serve]. My dream was to be a federal law enforcement officer; once I found out that drug interdiction was one of the main responsibilities of the U.S. Coast Guard, I could hardly wait to join,” he recalls.

Today Mendoza is a sales education trainer for Combined Insurance in the Chicago, IL area, specifically based in Round Lake, IL. He’s responsible for preparing and facilitating training sessions for Combined’s new agents and front-line management staff in a classroom setting. Facilitation includes demonstrating a comprehensive sales approach by reviewing the sales life cycle and product lines.

According to Mendoza, one of the hardest things to get used to when transitioning into civilian life is finding about what you are passionate.

“For me, one thing I always loved about going to work every day in the Coast Guard was knowing when I got off duty, I made a difference in someone’s life. That’s the exact feeling I have every Friday when my students graduate from the one-week sales school training at Combined Insurance. I know I’ve given my students the best opportunity to create a better life for themselves and their family,” he elaborates.

His advice for veterans seeking employment is “to simply find your passion and what it is that you enjoy doing. Realize that no matter what job that you interview for, no matter the industry, no matter who the other applicants are, you have experience and abilities that no one else has - know your worth. Much like the military, when transitioning to civilian life, you may start at the bottom, but if you work hard, then opportunities will open and allow you the career you deserve.”

One of the greatest benefits that comes with being a mem-

VET INTEL

THE ANNUAL VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECLINED TO 3.5% IN 2018, WHICH IS THE LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 2000.

THE JOBLESS RATE FOR ALL VETERANS FELL TO AN 18-YEAR LOW OF 3.5% IN 2018, FROM ITS PEAK AT 9.9% IN 2011.

UNEMPLOYMENT FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE U.S. ARMED FORCES AT ANY TIME SINCE SEPTEMBER 2001 DROPPED FROM 4.5% IN 2017 TO 3.5% IN 2018, WHICH IS THE LOWEST RATE RECORDED SINCE U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (BLS) BEGAN COLLECTING THE DATA IN 2008.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR WOMAN VETERANS FELL TO 3% IN 2018.

AMONG THE 326,000 UNEMPLOYED VETERANS IN 2018, NEARLY 60% WERE AGE 45 AND OLDER: 35% WERE AGES 25 TO 44, AND 6% WERE AGES 18 TO 24.

AS OF AUGUST 2018 ABOUT ONE IN THREE EMPLOYED VETERANS WITH A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY WORKED IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, COMPARED TO ABOUT ONE IN FIVE VETERANS WITH NO DISABILITY.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF VETERANS VARIED ACROSS THE COUNTRY, RANGING FROM 1.4% IN IOWA TO 6.5% IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

ber of the armed services, explains Mendoza, are “the educational opportunities that are afforded to us. That being said, I encourage every veteran to utilize the Post-9/11 or GI bill in any way possible. For some people college is scary, myself included, but once I attended my first class after I got out of the military, I fell in love with it. One thing I didn’t realize until I got into college was that all of the discipline, hard work and critical thinking that makes people who serve successful is exactly what will make you a successful student.”

Mendoza sustained several injuries while in the USCG, both mentally and physically.

“I’m a wounded warrior, and have been since 2011. I began to experience grand mal seizures in 2008 from repeated traumatic brain injury (TBI), and I was medically discharged in January 2011. Along with my seizures, I experienced depression, anxiety and PTSD. Through it all, I still go through seizures, anxiety and depression at times, but knowing I’m not the only one suffering from these symptoms helps me every day. I continue therapy speaking with psychologist on a regular basis through the VA, along with medical treatment for my seizures as well.”

Staying positive, he adds: “Everything I have in my life is because of the opportunities my service to this country has provided me. I recognize I have a life-changing disability that will affect me for the rest of my life, but if you were to ask me if I’d do it over again, then I’d respond with, ‘Without a doubt.’”

The Coast Guard also gave him chances “to travel to places I never thought I would see, I made the best friends in the world who are like my brothers, and, most importantly, I was able to accomplish something no one in my family had ever done,” he concludes.

View available sales jobs at Combined Insurance, a Chubb company based in Chicago, IL, at combinedinsurance.com/careers. Connect on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube.
LEADERS IN MILITARY/VETERAN RECRUITING

PRIORITIZING VETERAN HIRES

Corporate leaders prioritize the hiring of veterans, recognizing the valuable skill set they bring to the civilian workforce.

They volunteered to serve our country. Many fought on the front lines. Some served in other capacities. But all endeavored to keep us safe. They’re our heroes and veterans, deserving of our gratitude, appreciation and a welcoming entry into the civilian workforce when their work protecting the country is done.

Doing so, however, demands thoughtful and educated planning, as well as personal and professional dedication by leaders charged with recruiting and hiring military personnel after their separation from the service.

It also takes encouragement and commitment on the part of companies - such as that exhibited by Accenture, Burns & McDonnell, Ryder and Brown-Forman highlighted here - who understand and value the skills and leadership vets bring to the table.

Mike Pett is Accenture’s North America military recruitment lead.

Jen Parker is a recruiting manager at Burns & McDonnell.

Mike Raley is the recruiting manager for the veterans and military program for Ryder.

Kathi Stearman is the employment compliance officer at Brown-Forman Corporation.

By Barbara Woodworth
Stressing Accenture’s embrace of diversity, Mike Pett, the company’s North America military recruitment lead, not only believes in employing people of all backgrounds and abilities, he further contends that veterans make a workforce stronger.

“Known for a robust work ethic, commitment to excellence, attention to detail and ability to succeed in challenging environments, veterans exemplify many of the same core values that Accenture lives by,” he states.

Charged with overseeing special projects geared toward hiring veterans, Pett’s team - comprised by veterans and military spouses - draw upon their personal experiences to aid service members currently transitioning to civilian life by providing a wide range of support that includes individual career planning, resume writing and interview preparation.

“Entering the civilian workforce is an adjustment, and we aim to make that transition as easy as possible,” he notes, emphasizing that company support and resources continue throughout the process.

Aware that many veterans find transitioning to the private sector to be a lengthy endeavor, Pett also points to difficulties experienced by some veterans as they attempt to translate their military skills into professional resumes.

To ease this process, Accenture’s military recruitment team drives forward a range of initiatives designed to move veterans into sustainable careers. Examples include, participation in the company’s student veteran program, which is a national military program focused on veterans inclined to pursue undergraduate and MBA degrees, and the junior military officer program, which targets current military officers with three to seven years’ experience considered a good fit for industry consultants.

“Overall military veterans want to work for companies they believe both value their service, as well as realize the potential and skills they bring. Looking ahead to 2020, Accenture is working to make this a reality for more veterans across the U.S.”

2019 & VET UNEMPLOYMENT: IT’S NOT JUST THE NUMBER

A 2018 U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) report indicated veteran unemployment hit an all-time low of 3.5%. It’s a result of the commitment of our nation to our veterans, and the acknowledgement of the tremendous leadership and skill sets they provide.

This number should be celebrated, but our mission isn’t complete. Sustainment should now be the focus with our sights set on meaningful career pathways for veterans and their families. When we fully leverage their continued leadership, we all benefit.

We also need a more meaningful way to measure veteran unemployment to provide a better picture of veterans who may need help transitioning from military to civilian life or feel unfilled in their current role.

Businesses have the power to change this. As a starting point, organizations can:

- Consider joining the U.S. Chamber Hiring Our Heroes team, hiringourheroes.org, and its nationwide effort to connect veterans, service members and military spouses with meaningful employment opportunities.
- Join the Veterans Jobs Mission, veteranjobsmission.com, and get to know its employer resources to develop employment start-up guides and mentorship frameworks, all necessary to leverage veteran talent.
- Organizations like Hire Heroes USA, hireheroesusa.org, work to transform military service into civilian successes through personalized career preparation alongside resources for interested employers.

Corporations also need to have a mature veteran hiring process, which includes onboarding and retention. To help mitigate misunderstandings and biases that may occur in the workforce, companies can do a better job of leveraging veteran talent via employee resource groups (ERGs).

Businesses should also consider implementing mentorship programs that help veterans understand the importance of establishing their value and “professional brand,” while also supporting and maintaining their team focus.

— Colonel Matthew F. Amidon, USMCR

About the Author: Colonel Amidon, USMCR is the director of the military service initiative at the George W. Bush Institute.

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“Accenture additionally waives standard college degree
recruitment for some positions, such as entry-level software engineers, for those already in possession of skills necessary to be job-ready,” Pett states.

Accenture - which has innovation hubs in 10 major cities in the U.S. with global headquarters in Dublin, Ireland - consistently champions ways for the company’s military community to grow internally.

“New veterans are encouraged to join the military employee resource group, focused on strengthening and cultivating a cohesive and engaged military community through involvement, stewardship and mentorship,” Pett highlights.

The Accenture New Joiner Guide for veterans and military spouses provides a quick reference regarding workplace-related topics while the company’s veterans integration programs help new veterans ease into Accenture by participating in local and national leadership meetings and networking opportunities within the company’s military community. This is coupled with a buddy program that pairs new joiners with existing veteran and military spouse employees.

“Overall military veterans want to work for companies they believe both value their service, as well as realize the potential and skills they bring. Looking ahead to 2020, Accenture is working to make this a reality for more veterans across the U.S.,” reports Pett.

He does, however, underscore a recent gap in veteran hiring that still needs to be filled, and one Accenture’s veterans’ programs and initiatives collectively aim to close. “Despite recognizing the value of hiring veterans - rather than just filling a quota - there still exists a disconnect between highly skilled and educated veterans and the companies that seek to employ them, often causing continued difficulties for those transitioning from the field to the office.”

Pett’s advice to companies hoping to increase their hiring of veterans is two-fold.

“First, corporations need to work with third-party organizations to find excellent veteran and military spouse talent, and second, once these persons are in the door, programs must be in place to ensure they feel comfortable and supported during their transition,” he recommends.

“Offering training and programs to help with utilizing soft skills gained in the military and building professional skills needed to work in the civilian workforce are essential,” he adds.

For more information about careers at Accenture, visit accenture.com/military and accenture.com/careers. Connect on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

“AS A COMPANY THAT WORKS CLOSELY WITH THE federal, military and government space, Burns & McDonnell finds it critical to hire employees who are comfortable speaking with leadership, as well as with all ranks of service....Veterans connect well with those in leadership, as well as those in the field. They build relationships rapidly, and form true brotherhoods and sisterhoods that all can relate to.”

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“PARKER LAUDS BURNS & MCDONNELL’S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ATTRACTING VETS At KANSAS CITY, MO-HEADEDQUARTERED BURNS & MCDONNELL, VETERANS ARE A SOUGHT-AFTER EMPLOYEE POPULATION FOR MANY REASONS - AMONG THEM ARE THEIR LEADERSHIP, DISCIPLINE AND PROFESSIONALISM. According to Jen Parker, recruiting manager, “veterans speak the military lingo and are true problem-solvers. In addition, they’re known to have an excellent work ethic, high adaptability, familiarity with transitioning to different roles and flexibility regarding travel.” A 100% employee-owned, full-service engineering, architecture, construction, environmental and consulting solutions firm, Burns & McDonnell strives to recruit and hire individuals who appreciate - and are motivated by - the desire to become true owners of the business starting on day one.

“This creates a sense of entrepreneurialism that helps define the company’s collaborative culture focused on client service,” indicates Parker, noting that diversity is extremely important to Burns & McDonnell, which values employees with all types of experiences and diversity of thought - all of which is also typically found in veterans.

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THE CAREER EXPO FOR PEOPLE WITH disABILITIES & WOUNDED WARRIORS

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November 22, 2019 • Washington, DC
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Ronald Reagan Building, Atrium Hall
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Join us at our Washington, DC career expo to meet with Fortune 500 companies and government agencies looking to recruit new talent.

FREE ADMISSION
• Business attire required • Bring numerous copies of resume
• Must be at least 18 years of age (proof required)

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• Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD)
Heroes program, which offers internships and focuses on veterans retiring and/or preparing to separate from the military. Referring to the success of this endeavor, Parker points out that “of the five interns, two have been hired and one has already been promoted to a section manager position.”

The company’s participation in veteran-focused career fairs includes pairing HR team members with veteran employees when meeting potential candidates at such gatherings as the Service Academy Career Conference in Washington, DC and virtual career fairs that target navy nuclear officers. The company’s website link, burnsmcd-veterans.jobs, further provides an imbedded military code that makes it easier to find jobs related to specific roles in the military.

Due to the fact that Burns & McDonnell works hard to retain its past-military talent, many special events are held, including an annual Veterans Day Celebration.

“These offerings include all staff members, and provide the opportunity to honor and pay respect to all veterans who have served our country,” notes Parker.

When asked what advice she might have for other companies working to increase their hiring of veterans, she replies: “It’s important for companies and employees to seek different points of view and perspectives - something veterans truly provide. Veterans connect well with those in leadership, as well as those in the field. They build relationships rapidly, and form true brotherhoods and sisterhoods that all can relate to.”

For more information about Burns & McDonnell, visit burnsmcd-veterans.jobs and burnsmcd.com/careers. Connect on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

MIKE RALEY, RECRUITING MANAGER FOR THE VETERANS AND MILITARY PROGRAM FOR RYDER, UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF RECRUITING AND HIRING VETERANS AT THE MIAMI, FL-HEADQUARTERED COMPANY.

“As a leader in transportation and logistics, Ryder understands the unique work experience of military personnel and values their inherent leadership qualities. The company offers a variety of opportunities by actively recruiting and filling open positions with highly skilled military veterans,” he notes.

Raley’s role in planning, implementing, and overseeing veteran hiring and recruitment has been proactive since joining the company in 2014. Since his initial employment, he’s taken the initiative to spearhead the establishment and launch of the Ryder U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Driver National Apprentice Program that, with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) approval, qualifies veterans to access GI Bill benefits, as well as the Ryder diesel technician training for active military members as part of the career skills program of the U.S. Army.

“On Veteran’s Day 2015 the Veteran Buddy Program was instituted, which pairs each new Ryder veteran with a current veteran to help ease the transition from military to civilian life – which is often a major challenge for recently separated veterans returning to the workforce,” he explains.

The following year a woman veterans task force was established to focus on methods and practices for attracting more female veterans to the transportation industry, and to Ryder, in particular.

In November 2011 Ryder partnered with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Hiring Our Heroes (HOH) and FASTPORT, which focus on mentoring current and former military members. They also provide them with the chance to learn about the transportation and trucking industry - and employment at Ryder.

Raley understands the leadership & values veterans bring to Ryder’s workplace.

“Ryder is also a member of the Veterans Employment Advisory Council, established as part of the Hiring Our Heroes Program, an initiative focused on enhancing collaboration between the public and private sectors to improve career opportunities for veterans,” Raley adds.

From the start of Ryder’s veteran hiring initiative in November 2011 to March 2018, the company’s hired 8,132 veterans.

Furthermore, in July 2016 Ryder partnered with the U.S. Army Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program to begin skills training that provides hands-on diesel technician training for military veterans exiting military service.

“Following completion of this 12-week program graduates are placed in eligible open level II technician positions at Ryder locations across the country,” says Raley, who adds that at the end of 2019 the company will have expanded its training program to five additional military installations.

Troops into Transportation, instituted in 2018, was another program in which Ryder participated and in which eligible commercial driver license (CDL) school graduates, recently separated from the service, are hired into CDL driver positions.

“Veterans have the ability to fill a variety of roles important to [Ryder’s] operations - among them diesel mechanics, professional truck drivers, logistics managers and a number of other support positions.”
Included among the specific skills Raley finds both evident and demonstrable by veteran employees are the distinct logistical, mechanical and management skills learned via military service. "These are a great asset to Ryder’s organization," he states. "Veterans have the ability to fill a variety of roles important to company operations - among them diesel mechanics, professional truck drivers, logistics managers and a number of other support positions."

Raley’s advice to other companies looking to increase their recruiting and hiring of veterans necessitates developing an understanding of the unique skills and abilities military veterans can bring to an organization, as well as the unique perspectives held by transitioning military members. "Military veterans bring with them a drive, dedication, and mission focus rarely found in their civilian counterparts - and that makes them a valuable addition to any team," he states.

For more information about Ryder, visit ryder.com/careers/military-recruitment and ryder.com/careers. Connect on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Stearman Is Proud of Brown-Forman's Commitment to Hiring Vets

At nearly 150-year-old, Louisville, KY-headquartered Brown-Forman Corporation, the operative word is proud when it comes to committing to hire veterans. As employment compliance officer, Kathi Stearman spearheads this effort in conjunction with other human resource personnel.

“Brown-Forman is proud to hire military veterans who have done so much for our country,” she indicates.

“Committed to leveraging veterans as a strategic source of talent, Brown-Forman’s vision is to be an employer of choice among the veteran community by creating an environment where veterans can successfully transition to the civilian workplace using their skills, experience and leadership to establish meaningful careers.”

In her role at this long-term “builder” of quality alcohol brands - premium wines and spirits - Stearman works with talent acquisition managers and members of the company’s veteran employee resource group BRAVE to develop and implement strategies to increase the company’s hiring of veterans, as well as to improve out-boarding efforts - such as utilizing mentors for veteran hires - intended to increase the success of veterans being hired.

Doing so, she further details, involves working together to put forth various suggestions to leadership.

Highlighting Brown-Forman’s core values of trust, respect, integrity, excellence and teamwork, Stearman shares that “these values are deeply ingrained in the company culture and closely aligned with those held by individuals who served in the military.”

With current initiatives and policies in place, Brown-Forman consistently continues its drive to identify additional positions that benefit veterans.

“We work with senior leadership to get buy-in on the value veterans bring to the work space, and with talent acquisition on new recruiting measures that focus on increasing the hiring of veterans,” says Stearman, adding that she and her team consistently work on new ways to keep veterans top-of-mind in the company’s hiring efforts.

By engaging in strategic veteran outreach with community partners throughout the U.S., Brown-Forman builds its military-friendly brand in the communities in which employees live and work.

“Many members of BRAVE help focus on recruiting by moving beyond being just ‘military-friendly’ and aiming to be more ‘military-informed’ or ‘military-ready’,” says Stearman. “This involves providing resources to veteran candidates, as well as to the internal organization, including HR trainers and recruiters.”

“Committed to leveraging veterans as a strategic source of talent, Brown-Forman’s vision is to be an employer of choice among the veteran community by creating an environment where veterans can successfully transition to the civilian workplace using their skills, experience and leadership to establish meaningful careers.”

Stearman finds the company’s success in hiring veterans is largely the result of having a multifunctional team focused on recruitment, hiring and out-boarding veterans. She further believes this assures that veterans understand the culture and the role in which they find themselves, as well as ensures they have the support and tools they need to be successful.

She underscores the importance of the ability to combine different perspectives into a singular innovative strategy. “My advice to other companies working to increase their hiring of veterans is to adhere to best practices when implementing new ideas, but to also realize that what works for one company may not necessarily work for another,” she shares.

For more information about Brown-Forman, visit brown-forman-veterans.jobs and brown-forman.jobs. Connect on Twitter and LinkedIn.
COMMITTED TO SERVICE

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OFFERS A MASSIVE AND GROWING ARRAY OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES.

Whether you want to work outside in a field or inside at a desk, prefer interfacing with people all day or thrive in quiet solitude, the federal government offers endless career opportunities for individuals of all abilities.

And there’s no better time than the present to look to federal employment; a report released by the Congressional Research Service in March showed the number of full-time federal employees is expected to rise by 85,000 by next year.

Here seven individuals committed to service talk about their positions within the federal government, and share what makes their agencies great places to work.

Daniel Rodriquez decides what can be released to the public, and what can’t.

An archivist at the National Declassification Center at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Rodriquez works on the Nixon White House

Daniel Rodriquez, who is a Marine and combat veteran diagnosed with PTSD after returning from duty, is an archivist at the National Declassification Center at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).
Tapes, coordinating the mandatory declassification review of these tapes with relevant agencies, and reviewing the tapes for content and release under the Presidential Recording and Materials Preservation Act guidelines.

“Basically I listen to the tapes and have to decide whether certain withheld sections can be released to the public. I also enact declassification decisions,” he explains. “If a section can be released, then I’ll update the finding aid for them, and then create public access digital copies of the tapes, which are then released on the Nixon Library website.”

“V E R Y L I T T L E I S S T R A I G H T - F O R W A R D , A N D M O S T days there are interesting problems to solve. The content is very rewarding as every day you get to hear content few people have ever heard. The fly-on-the-wall aspect of listening into the functions of running the country, electioneering and foreign policy never gets old.”

With degrees in history, Rodriguez says he “accidently” became an archivist. After his first position at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, he knew he enjoyed working in museums, but he wanted to do more work behind the scenes.

“That’s how I came to the Nixon Library and began working on the tapes. It was a natural fit as it allowed me to work with researchers, write and help preserve the collection for future generations,” he shares.

A Marine and combat veteran diagnosed with PTSD after returning from duty, Rodriguez notes that the early years of his career were difficult.

“Working in a secure room with no windows and often in solitude exacerbated many of the symptoms,” he recalls. “I was often emotionally exhausted every day after work, and found it difficult to enjoy my time away from work.”

Time and the aid of a service dog has allowed Rodríguez to more successfully manage his PTSD, and he appreciates that his job always brings new challenges and interesting content.

“Very little is straight-forward, and most days there are interesting problems to solve,” he notes. “The content is very rewarding as every day you get to hear content few people have ever heard. The fly-on-the-wall aspect of listening into the functions of running the country, electioneering and foreign policy never gets old.”

To succeed in this particular field, personal drive is important. “You need to be a self-starter and someone who can problem-solve on your own without needing constant supervision,” Rodríguez concludes.

Find career opportunities with Washington, DC-headquartered NARA at archives.gov/careers.

Connect on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tumblr, Flickr and YouTube.

Shropshire Helps Farmers Grow Their Operations at USDA

AARON J. SHROPSHIRE WORKS TO HELP FARMERS GET CRITICAL FUNDING FOR THEIR AGRICULTURAL VENTURES.

A farm loan officer with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in David City, NE, Shropshire was drawn to USDA because of his affinity for agriculture.

“I’ve had a passion for agriculture ever since I left service in the Marines,” notes Shropshire. Wanting to continue to serve his country, he started with USDA in February 2019, and works to secure government agricultural loans, primarily for beginning farmers, but established producers, as well.

“What I enjoy most about my job is helping young agricultural producers when they’re starting to build their family farm operations,” he shares.

In the Marine Corps for five years and having completed two deployments in Iraq to support Operation Iraqi Freedom, Shropshire reminds other veterans that embracing their experience can help them find success in the workplace.

“For veterans, [it] can be quite a culture shock from being in the military. You’re still serving your country in a different capacity, so be proud. Remember that not everyone you work with has the mental toughness, intestinal fortitude, or, in many cases, combat experiences that you have, so don’t be surprised if you feel different or at odds with your situation. It’ll set you apart in the end, though.”

To find a career with the federal government, Shropshire recommends using usajobs.gov, noting that the website allows users to set up notifications for jobs in which they’re interested. USDA also actively recruits at college career fairs, he further notes. “That’s an excellent place to visit with agency personnel about positions in the government.”

Learn how Washington, DC-headquartered USDA serves veterans at usda.gov/veterans or contact veterans@osec.usda.gov. Find information about USDA employment at usda.gov/our-agency/careers.

Connect on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube.
Merrick Krause works to help General Services Administration (GSA) work smarter. Krause serves as the GSA’s deputy human capital officer, and manages the agency’s enterprise human resources strategy, workforce planning, benefits, HR funding and agency-wide training.

Krause has recently been exploring a robotics initiative, something one may not expect to find in a human resources office.

“We’re planning to use technology to perform repetitive, data-management tasks,” he explains. “My goal is to free up time for our human resources specialists to serve clients - other federal employees - instead of spending their work time transcribing data from one source to another. This allows us to use our skilled personnel smarter.”

In fact, what Krause appreciates about GSA is its culture and its goal of using data to inform decisions.

“Some folks think using data is just a trend. However, good leaders and managers have always used data to support their decision-making. Today we often have more data than we need, making it easy for inexperienced leaders to see the forest for the trees. The trick is finding data that’s useful, [and] ‘actionable,’ and that means information that can help me make good decisions better. Our team does our best to make smart decisions, and we measure our outcomes, and then make even better decisions the next time.”

With GSA for about six months, Krause spent 27 years in the U.S. Air Force (USAF) and 13 years as a federal employee, doing tours with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Living and working with chronic pain, Krause’s back is “held together with steel rods” as thousands of hours dogfighting and high-G maneuvers crushed his discs and spine.

“It can be difficult during work, especially when having a flare-up, to not let physical pain affect your attitude. Regardless of the discomfort, I refuse to let it stop or ruin my work - work is just another challenge. Everyone has a problem, I’m no different. Working with chronic pain is like any other challenge: all it takes is concentration, maybe a doctor now and then, and a positive attitude. It’s just another challenge to overcome and move on from.”

Find information about employment with Washington, DC-headquartered GSA at gsa.gov/about-us/careers.
Connect on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter.
Debra Patkin works to make sure those with disabilities can access federal communications.

An attorney advisor with the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) disability rights office (DRO), Patkin provides advice and assistance on rule-making, waivers and rule interpretation on disability policy with regard to emergency communications and closed captioning on television for other bureaus and offices, consumers, industry, and others on such policies.

She entered the legal field because she wanted “to do my part to make this world a more equal one for everyone. This is probably one of the oldest clichés in the legal profession, but this is partly driven by the fact that I’m deaf and face instances of inaccessibility on a daily basis.”

Patkin, who uses ASL for non-written communications, finds it particularly exciting that the disability rights arena is somewhat untapped, as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is relatively young.

“The impact of advancing technology on disability rights is unmatched in other fields of civil rights law, and this is very appealing to me, as we have a great opportunity - and responsibility - to ensure the appropriate policies are being implemented to make sure individuals with disabilities aren’t left behind.”

With FCC for about one year, she was attracted to the agency for its interplay between disability and technology, and how technology can either enrich or derail accessibility progress.

“As we know, technology can advance rapidly, and laws often become outdated quickly. The FCC, especially its DRO, has tried to be proactive rather than retroactive. DRO’s work has had a huge and positive impact on millions of persons with disabilities via various regulatory and policy work in the context of closed captioning, video programming, telecommunication relay services [and] text-to-911, to name a few. Such work ultimately benefits everyone, with or without disabilities,” she states.
To find success in your career, Patkin advises others to be upfront about their disabilities. “As a new deaf lawyer, I was nervous about how to deal potential discrimination in the workplace. Someone told me the best thing I could do is to be upfront right away, as I wouldn’t want to work at a hostile workplace, or where I wouldn’t be appreciated, valued, or welcome.”

Find information about employment with Washington, DC-headquartered FCC at fcc.gov/general/fcc-jobs. Connect on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram.

Kristi Rugg and Colin Heffern have different roles within the National Park Service (NPS), but both work to connect people to the beauty, awe and importance of U.S. national parks.

Kristi Rugg, who is severely hard-of-hearing, is a media designer based at Joshua Tree National Park with the National Park Service (NPS).

Based at Joshua Tree National Park, Rugg is a media designer, shooting photos and videos, designing print publications and managing the park website. Recently she traveled to Georgia to film a video about NPS’ Traditional Trades Apprenticeship Program.

“One of the biggest moments for me in that trip was when one of the veterans spoke about his PTSD and how the program was helping him heal. It was incredibly moving, and it reminded me that public lands are places of refuge and emotional connection,” says Rugg, who’s been with NPS for 10 years. “That’s why I joined the National Park Service.”

“I’M SEVERELY HARD-OF-HEARING. I GREW UP IN A hearing household and wasn’t introduced to the Deaf community, language, and culture until my late teens. I prefer communicating by ASL, but I mostly read lips and speak at work. I’m used to feeling a bit ‘other’ as a Deaf queer woman. I think it’s made me more empathetic, adaptable and understanding.”
Heffern, like Rugg, is also based in the western half of the
U.S. But he works in a different capacity. He’s a landscape archi-
tect for the planning division of the Denver service center. He
supports planning projects for parks around the country. In the
past few years, Heffern’s been involved in developing acces-
sibility transition plans for parks, primarily on the West Coast.

“In these projects we help the park identify accessibility
barriers, draft possible solutions for removing the bar-
riers, and train staff to do their own assessments,” says
Heffern, who’s been with NPS for five years. He’s fin-
ishing projects with Grand Teton National Park,
Minidoka National Historic Site and Hagerman
Fossil Beds National Monument.

As to why he was drawn to NPS, he notes:
“The character of the park service and the abil-
ity to work in and influence historic and influ-
tential places around the country really appealed to me.”

While Rugg has undergraduate and graduate degrees
in music, education and theoretical mathematics, she
knows it seems incongruent that she’s a park ranger.
However, she explains how she put herself through
school by designing websites, serving as a computer tech,
and teaching. In turn, interacting with the public as a park
ranger and media designer is a natural fit.

“I spend my days connecting people with amazing
places, and helping them relate to the world around them
and our past. It’s part teaching, part designing, and part finding
solutions and links.”

Her work, she believes, is further supported by her disability.
“I’m severely hard-of-hearing. I grew up in a hearing household
and wasn’t introduced to the Deaf community, language, and
culture until my late teens. I prefer communicating by ASL,
but I mostly read lips and speak at work. I’m used to feeling
a bit ‘other’ as a Deaf queer woman. I think it’s made me
more empathetic, adaptable and understanding.”

Long been enamored by the outside world, Heffern
says that “landscape architecture offered the chance to
work in and creatively influence the spaces in which
we live and recreate.”

Taught to be curious, independent, and
kind, Heffern hasn’t allowed his injury to
change how he approaches his goals and
expectations.

“As a field, landscape architecture is heavily physi-
cal, and the ability to draw and quickly share and
respond to ideas is needed,” says Heffern, who has a C4
spinal cord injury and has little physical movement
below his shoulders.

“Thankfully the technology available to us today
gives me the ability to create those drawings, share
those ideas and effectively communicate.”

In fact, that sentiment echoes Heffern’s top career

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- **POLICE & PATROl OFFICERS**
- **RAIL MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS**

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**FED FAST FACT**

The number of full-time federal employees is expected to rise by 85,000 by next year.

Source: Congressional Research Service
advice: “Find something you love and make it work for you. Don’t let your disability dictate what you do.”

For both Rugg and Heffern, it’s the people who make their work great.

“Everyone is incredibly supportive, friendly, and passionate about the NPS, and our roles in the agency. We work on interesting projects, and have the ability to travel to some of the most picturesque and interesting places in the country,” shares Heffern. “It’s pretty sweet.”

Adds Rugg: “I love connecting with visitors from all over the world and traveling to park sites across the country to meet the amazing people who work to support the mission of the National Park Service.”

“TO SUCCEED IN THE HUMAN RESOURCES FIELD, ONE needs to pay attention to detail, have patience, an ability to adapt to changing priorities and great organizational skills. . . . People usually let their frustration out on the first person they speak with. I empathize with people and try to do what I can to help them.”

Yolanda Lawson, who is a paraplegic, is a human resources specialist with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). Drawn to human resources by a love for helping people, Yolanda Lawson is a human resources specialist with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), providing consultative services to agency divisions and offices about HR policies and procedures specific to placement and retention of qualified personnel.

She also sets and adjusts pay for new and current hires, and processes personnel actions.

“To succeed in the human resources field,” says Lawson, “one needs to pay attention to detail, have patience, an ability to adapt to changing priorities and great organizational skills.”

Lawson is currently putting those skills to use as part of a team dedicated to reducing the FDIC’s hiring timeline.

With the agency for 28 years, Lawson was originally attracted by the salary. But she admits that other perks quickly superseded the paycheck.

“After gaining employment, the benefits and camaraderie of employees were even more enticing than the salary,” she says. “The FDIC is a great place to work because the benefits are wonderful. The team I work with is great. We all help each other, and they’re especially helpful when and if I need assistance.”

That assistance is very welcome, adds Lawson, who is a paraplegic.

“Thanks to the wonderful management, staff and work-life benefits at the FDIC, my disability hasn’t affected my work.”

For other seeking people-forward positions such as human resources, Lawson advises to not take complaints personally.

“People usually let their frustration out on the first person they speak with. I empathize with people and try to do what I can to help them.”

Find information about employment with Washington, DC-headquartered FDIC at fdic.gov/about/jobs.

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Facebook
1 Hacker Way, Bldg. 28
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Website: www.facebook.com

Facebook is defined by its hacker culture - an environment that rewards creative problem-solving and rapid decision-making. It encourages people to be bold. Its open culture keeps everyone informed, and allows people to move around and solve the problems they care about most. It works in small teams and moves fast to develop new products, constantly iterating and improving. The phrase “this journey is 1% finished” is posted on its walls, reminding it that it’s only begun to fulfill its mission to bring the world closer together.

Central Intelligence Agency
Talent Acquisition Office
Washington, DC 20505
Website: www.cia.gov

The CIA is the premier agency responsible for providing global intelligence about the ever-changing political, social, economic, technological and military environment. Here your paramount goal and mission will be to protect the national security of the U.S. Virtually any job you can imagine is available at the CIA - plus, some you can’t even imagine.

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Easterseals Disability Staffing Network
1420 Spring Street
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Website: edsn.eseal.org

The Easterseals Disability Staffing Network (EDSN, pronounced “Edison”) empowers people with disabilities to obtain integrated, competitive employment. It’s a social venture employment agency that will match people with disabilities with a wide range of private-sector employers.

Federal Highway Administration - DOT
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
Website: http://staffnet.fhwa.dot.gov/

The Federal Highway Administration is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, headquartered in Washington, DC, with field offices across the country. Its professionals are responsible for ensuring the nation’s roads, highways, and bridges are among the safest and most technologically sound in the world. It offers rewarding careers in all areas of transportation and administrative career fields.
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JPMorgan Chase is a leading global financial services firm with a history dating back more than 200 years. It operates in more than 60 countries, has more than 240,000 employees, and serves millions of consumers, small businesses, and many of the world’s most prominent corporate, institutional, and government clients through its asset management, commercial bank, corporate and investment bank, consumer and community banking and corporate businesses. Its clients, transactions, deals and projects are global so it works hard to create diverse, inclusive teams that support its business and each other. This commitment encompasses hiring individuals with disabilities, including those who may require reasonable accommodations to perform their jobs or enhance job performance.

Leidos is a global science and technology solutions leader working to solve the world’s toughest challenges in the defense, intelligence, homeland security, civil and health markets. The company’s 33,000 employees support vital missions for government and commercial customers. Headquartered in Reston, VA, Leidos reported pro forma annual revenues of approximately $10 billion for the fiscal year ended January 1, 2016 after giving effect to the completed combination of Leidos with Lockheed Martin’s Information Systems and Global Solutions business (IS&GS). For more information visit www.Leidos.com. The company’s diverse employees support vital missions for government and commercial customers. Qualified women, minorities, individuals with disabilities and protected veterans are encouraged to apply. Leidos will consider qualified applicants with criminal histories for employment in accordance with relevant laws. Leidos is an equal opportunity employer.

NGA delivers world-class geospatial intelligence that provides a decisive advantage to policymakers, warfighters, intelligence professionals and first responders. Anyone who sails a U.S. ship, flies a U.S. aircraft, makes national policy decisions, fights wars, locates targets, responds to natural disasters or even navigates with a cell-phone relies on NGA. NGA enables all of these critical actions and shapes decisions that impact the world via the indispensable discipline of geospatial intelligence, or GEOINT. NGA is headquartered in Springfield, VA, and has two major locations in St. Louis, MO and Arnold, MO. Hundreds of NGA employees serve on support teams at U.S. military, diplomatic and allied locations around the world. It’s the world leader in timely, relevant, accurate and actionable GEOINT. NGA enables the U.S. intelligence community and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to fulfill the president’s national security priorities to protect the nation. NGA also anticipates its partners’ future needs and advances the GEOINT discipline to meet them.

The NSA/CSS core missions are to protect U.S. national security systems and to produce foreign signals intelligence information. The information assurance mission confronts the formidable challenge of preventing foreign adversaries from gaining access to sensitive or classified national security information. The signals intelligence mission collects, processes, and disseminates intelligence information from foreign signals for intelligence and counterintelligence purposes and to support military operations. This agency also enables network warfare operations to defeat terrorists and their organizations at home and abroad, consistent with U.S. laws, and the protection of privacy and civil liberties.

The Naval Intelligence Activity (NIA) is the leading provider of maritime intelligence to the U.S. Navy and joint warfighting forces, as well as national decision-makers and other consumers in the intelligence community. NIA specializes in the collection, analysis, production, and dissemination of vital, timely, and accurate scientific, technical, geopolitical, and military intelligence information for key consumers worldwide.

NCI is a leading worldwide provider of innovative services and solutions. Its areas of expertise include cloud computing and IT optimization, cybersecurity and information assurance, engineering and logistics support, enterprise information management and advanced analytics, global healthcare, IT service management, software and systems development/integration, and training and simulation.
Social Security Administration: forward-thinking, radical approaches, surpassing the standard. These are the elements that created one of the world’s most successful social insurances programs. For more than 65 years, the Social Security Administration (SSA) has played a part in the lives of nearly everyone you know. With more than 90% of the U.S. population covered by Social Security, new challenges require it questions the limits of the status quo, reaching outside of the realm of the usual and standard. SSA seeks explorers to shape the future with it. If you want to “make a difference in people’s lives and your own,” then consider working for SSA.

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USAID

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead federal agency providing foreign assistance and humanitarian aid to the developing world. USAID is a key component of U.S. national security and foreign policy.

U.S. Department of State, OAA

The U.S. Department of State is the leading foreign-affairs agency of the federal government. It has challenging careers available in the civil service in Washington, DC, and in the foreign service overseas at U.S. embassies and consulates.

U.S. EPA Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

The EPA Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention’s mission is to protect people and the environment from potential risks from pesticides and toxic chemicals. It also works to prevent pollution, which saves energy and natural resources, reduces waste, and leaves homes, schools, and workplaces cleaner and safer.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) employees protect America from the cross-border crime and illegal immigration that threaten national security and public safety. To carry out its mission, ICE focuses on legal and safe immigration enforcement, terrorism prevention, and combating transnational criminal threats. For more information about ICE and careers at ICE, please visit https://ice.gov or go directly to https://www.ice.gov/careers.

U.S. Navy Strategic Systems Programs

SSP has a more than 50-year history of providing credible, sea-based, deterrent missile systems essential to protecting the nation and fulfilling the terms of the U.S./U.K. sales agreement for the U.K. POLARIS, POSEIDEN and TRIDENT Ballistic Missile programs. However, it wouldn’t be able to successfully accomplish its mission without its most critical resource: people. SSP seeks highly motivated, diverse, and talented individuals for entry- to senior-level positions in a multitude of civilian career fields. When you join the SSP team, you become a valued employee of an organization of highly specialized civilians and military personnel committed to the defense of the nation. Visit its website at www.ssp.navy.mil to find out more about SSP employment opportunities and the benefits of federal civilian employment.

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