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SEPTEMBER + OCTOBER 2020

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Marcelino Marquez  
U.S. Marine Corps Veteran  
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# SEARCH & EMPLOY

SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2020  
VOL. XIII ISSUE 5

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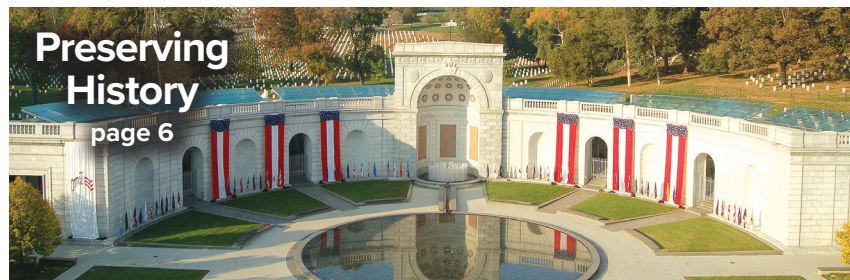
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# Editor's Note



ASHLEY CONNERS

September has always felt like both an end and a beginning to me.

In the Midwest, cooler weather and shorter days slowly overcome the sense of freedom and relaxation that dominated the summer months. At the same time, the promise of a fresh start associated with the beginning of a new school year has stayed with me long after my "student" title was retired.

I thought September might feel different this year, but I'm pleasantly surprised that it does not. It's reassuring to know that some things never change, even when everything around us is in flux.

Take RecruitMilitary, for example. In October 2016, Bradley-Morris, Inc. and RecruitMilitary merged to create the largest military-to-civilian recruiting company in the U.S. Over the past four years, our leadership team has worked tirelessly to bring the organizations together in a cohesive way that maximizes the value we bring to our clients and job seekers. Throughout this journey, our mission has never wavered; We always have and always will help employers connect with America's best talent – its veterans.

As we move closer to the last quarter of 2020, consider the possibilities of embracing this time as a beginning. What is your vision for the rest of the year? Your goals? It's not too late to make some headway in reaching them.

While no one can predict the future, there is immense value in continuing to pursue your professional goals right now. As you push forward in your civilian career journey, know that we are here to help.

Thank you for letting us serve you.

## SEARCH & EMPLOY®

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## RECRUIT MILITARY®

RecruitMilitary, the publisher of Search & Employ®, is a full-service military-to-civilian recruitment firm that connects job seekers who have military backgrounds with employers, franchisors, and educational institutions. RecruitMilitary is a division of Bradley-Morris, Inc. Our hiring services are free to men and women of all ranks/rates and all branches of the service who are transitioning from active duty to civilian life, veterans who already have civilian work experience, members of the National Guard and Reserves, and military spouses and other family members.

In 2018 and 2019, Bradley-Morris/RecruitMilitary was awarded the gold HIRE Vets Medalion Program Distinction Award from the U.S. Department of Labor for leadership in recruiting, employing, and retaining America's veterans.

In 2020, Bradley-Morris/RecruitMilitary was appointed by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command to provide employment services and resources through the Army Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to support America's transitioning soldiers, members of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, Army alumni (veterans), and all Army spouses.

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

For more information about Bradley-Morris/RecruitMilitary, visit [www.recruitmilitary.com](http://www.recruitmilitary.com).





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# A New MISSION



As an intermediate care technician at VA, former Army medic Daniel Mendoza continues to serve his fellow Veterans on a different front line: **COVID-19**.

PHOTOS: ADAN PULIDO,  
VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



ICT DANIEL MENDOZA PREPARES TO TAKE A VETERAN'S TEMPERATURE IN A DRIVE-THROUGH COVID-19 SCREENING.

**DANIEL MENDOZA SPENT OVER SEVEN YEARS IN THE U.S. ARMY, BOTH AS A COMBAT AND FLIGHT MEDIC.** His military experience has proven invaluable to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Palo Alto Health Care System, where he works as an Intermediate Care Technician (ICT) in the emergency department. Recently, Mendoza's role as an ICT has taken him to the front lines of a different battle — the coronavirus.

As part of the Transitioning Military Personnel initiative, the ICT program allows VA to bring former military corpsmen and medics into positions at VA medical centers as an integral part of the medical team. As an ICT, Mendoza has the opportunity to advance the quality of care for Veterans enrolled in VA by applying his military training to the job at hand. But he also has the opportunity to grow his skill set and expand his career by taking advantage of the many education benefits VA offers its employees.

VA recently interviewed Mendoza to get a closer look at a typical day on the job during the pandemic and how the ICT program helps Veterans put their skills to work in the civilian world.

## **BEFORE COVID-19, WHAT WERE YOUR DAILY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES?**

Before the pandemic, the other ICTs and I were in charge of ensuring supplies were in stock for specialty carts, like wound care or casting. Also, we would help the nurses with EKGs, starting IVs, drawing blood labs, inserting nasogastric tubes and much more.

## **WHAT DOES YOUR TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE NOW?**

Right now, I'm mostly focused on possible COVID-19 patients and directing them before they come in. That's what I do most weekdays, but during the weekend I'm still helping nurses with IVs and EKGs for patients who we think might have COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.

During the week, I arrive at work at 7 a.m. and have a morning huddle with the nursing staff. By 7:30 a.m., I am checking the outdoor medical screening area cart for personal protective equipment (PPE) — gowns, hair nets, plenty of gloves. I'm also checking for documentation, which is the medical paperwork that we'll upload to the patient's files. Sometimes we'll have extra swabs in our cart. There are quite a few things in there.

"The most rewarding part of the job is getting to interact with other Veterans and use the skills I learned in the Army as a medic."

At 8 a.m., I set up our outdoor screening area with a vitals machine and cart and don my PAPR (powered air purifying respirator) mask, gown and gloves. I have a beard, so I can't wear the N-95.

At 8:30 a.m., we start receiving patients. I begin by asking them screening questions related to COVID-19: Do you have a worsening cough? Do you have new onset or worsening shortness of breath? Do you have a fever? Those are the typical ones. We also ask about loss of smell and taste, along with a few more in-depth ones. Then, I take vitals. I present the vitals and the answers to the questions to the medical screening area doctor and we decide if the patient should be seen at the respiratory clinic, urgent care or emergency room.

This continues throughout the day until 4:30 p.m. Then, I doff my PPE and clean it. We have to take it off a certain way — there's a 12-step process. By 5:30 p.m., I am done bringing everything back and I am off for the day.

## **WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR DAY? HOW DO YOU OVERCOME THIS CHALLENGE?**

I think the most challenging part of my day is when both the doctor on shift and I get a huge influx of patients. We have to

rapidly assess them and direct them to appropriate areas of care according to their symptoms and subjective complaints.

## **WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR JOB?**

The most rewarding part of the job is getting to interact with other Veterans and use the skills I learned in the Army as a medic.

## **WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST SURPRISING ABOUT WORKING AT VA?**

What I found most surprising at VA is how quickly patients get seen in the emergency room (ER). As a patient in other ERs, I waited multiple hours to get a room. Here, I almost never see a Veteran wait longer than an hour in the waiting room.

## **HOW HAS VA HELPED YOU GROW IN YOUR CAREER?**

VA is helping me become a better care provider for people in general and has helped me grow confident in my skills. Also, I am a nursing student. I'm using the GI bill through VA, and it makes nursing school easy because I get to apply some of the things I learn here and at school interchangeably.

## **WHAT ARE A FEW KEY BENEFITS OF WORKING AT VA?**

I think the key benefits for me are putting money into a TSP [Thrift Savings Plan] savings account and my retirement. Also, paid time off is great here because they took into consideration my years in the Army.

## **WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHER VETERANS OR MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN CHOOSING A CAREER AT VA?**

VA is a great organization that has a noble mission of taking care of those who made the decision to fight for our nation.

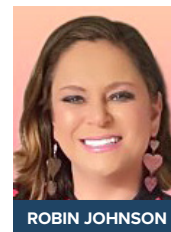
## **WORK AT VA TODAY**

The ability to work in health care after the military and serve fellow Veterans led Mendoza to choose a VA career. See if an ICT position at VA is the right choice for you, too. Visit [www.vacareers.va.gov](http://www.vacareers.va.gov) for more details on the many benefits of a VA career and to learn how transitioning military medics and corpsmen can work at VA.

# Preserving History

How the Women's Memorial is enriching the future by preserving the past.

BY ASHLEY CONNERS



ROBIN JOHNSON

**ROBIN JOHNSON RECENTLY RETIRED FROM THE U.S. ARMY AFTER 21 YEARS OF SERVICE AND OBTAINING THE RANK OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL.** Though her transition out of the military looked different than expected due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Johnson wasted no time finding her next mission: honoring her fellow servicewomen of the past, present, and future.

As the newly appointed chief of staff for the Women In Military Service For America Memorial (Women's Memorial), Johnson has embraced the opportunity to help the organization preserve and share the stories of women who have served in the military.

"As the only national memorial honoring all servicewomen, it is critical that we safeguard these stories for future generations," said Johnson. "I'm excited to be part of something that is important for our country's history and future."

## Enriching the Future

Originally dedicated in 1997 and located at the Ceremonial Entrance to Arlington National Cemetery, the Women's Memorial is currently undergoing a renewed push

to expand the historical narrative and widen the public's knowledge about women's roles in the military.

"Almost three million women have served in the military since the American Revolution," said Johnson. "We are working to implement reimagined displays and an immersive experience to showcase their service."

In addition to collecting, sharing, and preserving the stories of women in service, Johnson leads the Women's Memorial in developing new ways to educate the public and support women veterans with thought-leadership outreach, speaker series events, and developing educational content for children.

## Finding Success & Fulfillment

Though some of Johnson's military experience closely mirrors the responsibilities of her

current role, there are still challenges to overcome in adjusting to the civilian workforce.

"Even though I have very specific and relatable experience as a chief of staff in the military, I had to adjust to the pace of the private sector," said Johnson.

Overall, being part of the efforts to capture and share the stories of fellow servicewomen is a rewarding and fulfilling follow-up to Johnson's extensive military career. "Women represent the largest growing demographic of U.S. veterans," she said. "Every servicewoman deserves to take her rightful place in history."

Submit your story or the story of a servicewoman you know to the Women's Memorial National Register here: [www.womensmemorial.org/register-now](http://www.womensmemorial.org/register-now).

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▶ MARQUEZ WITH HIS WIFE, FRANCES, THEIR CHILDREN, BELLA, MAYA, AND JACOB, AND THEIR DOG, REX. Photo courtesy of Marcelino Marquez

# Advancing Through Adversity

By Ashley Connors

U.S. Marine Corps veteran and U.S. Marine Corps Reserve member **MARCELINO MARQUEZ** has a reputation for overcoming even the most difficult challenges while maintaining a positive attitude.

From excelling in an unconventional military career to pursuing a career in information technology (I.T.), Marquez applies the same sense of commitment, enthusiasm, and passion for serving others.



**MARCELINO MARQUEZ**

## A STRONG FOUNDATION

Marquez joined the Marine Corps after high school and served for four years in an infantry role. He then served two additional years with the Marine Corps Reserve before transitioning out of the military and fully into civilian life. But like many servicemembers, veterans, and military families, Marquez's plans changed on September 11, 2001.

With a strong desire to continue serving his country and fellow servicemembers during a time of need, Marquez re-enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve. He served as a low-altitude air defense (LAAD) gunner before fulfilling mortuary affairs and logistics chief roles. Marquez served on active duty status for 14 years, deploying twice to Afghanistan and twice to Iraq. In 2017, he returned to Reserve duty status, where he continues to serve today.

Throughout his extensive time serving in an active duty capacity and his 28-years of service, Marquez picked up plenty of transferable, in-demand skills, including leadership, communication, and perseverance.

However, transitioning back to civilian life proved difficult at first. "I was constantly looking for jobs, but nothing worked out," said Marquez. "Employers did not understand my military experience."

Marquez knew that overcoming the challenges he was facing in finding a meaningful civilian role would require hard work, effort, and determination.

That's when he found MyComputerCareer and decided to utilize his earned education benefits to prepare for a career in the I.T. industry.

## EDUCATION FOR LIFE

When Marquez began his education journey with MyComputerCareer, he knew it would jumpstart a civilian career in I.T., but he did not anticipate the level of care, support, and assistance he would receive. "My instructors were available anytime I had questions and they appreciated my dedication to completing the mission in front of me," he said. "They understood how the skills I learned in the military influenced the way I learn and complete projects."

Today, Marquez serves as a site supervisor for a defense and government

**"You are responsible for your own future. You have to work hard, adapt quickly, and never give up."**

services contractor and continues to work on earning additional certifications through MyComputerCareer to further advance his career.

## Ashley: Why did you decide to pursue a career in I.T.?

**Marcelino Marquez:** My initial job search after returning from active duty status was disheartening. After a few months of submitting applications and going to interviews with no results, I knew I needed to do something to change the status quo. There are many organizations devoted to helping veterans, but at the end of the day I am responsible for my own future, so I had to put in the hard work and effort to

**M**arquez's journey with MyComputerCareer brought more than just an education in I.T.

MyComputerCareer partners with the Lifetime Television Network to sponsor a show titled "Military Makeover with Montel Williams," which helps a deserving veteran remodel their home.

Marquez and his family were recently chosen to be featured on the show, and the platform allowed Marquez to speak about the importance of asking for help and reaching out to support fellow veterans. "I struggled silently with PTSD for years," said Marquez. "When I opened up about my struggles, I was able to get help in managing them."

One technique that Marquez learned was to make a conscious choice to start each day with a positive thought. "I've passed this lesson down to my daughters and my son," he said. "Together, we practice being resilient and positive in the face of adversity."



▲ MARQUEZ WITH HIS FAMILY AT HIS PROMOTION CEREMONY IN 2018.  
Photo courtesy of Marcelino Marquez

improve my situation. I found MyComputerCareer and decided to use my education benefits to build a meaningful career path for myself and a better future for my family.

**A: What lessons did you learn in the military that have helped you in your education journey and I.T. career?**

**MM:** Mission-completion, planning, time-management, and leadership are skills from my military experience that make a huge difference in pursuing my I.T. certifications. If you manage your time well and plan ahead, the coursework is completely doable, even with other family and work obligations.

Strong leadership skills have helped me in every civilian role. A combination of I.T. certifications and the leadership skills gained during military service make veterans very valuable employees in this field.

**A: What was the best part of your experience with MyComputerCareer?**

**MM:** The support that MyComputerCareer offers is incredible. When I first showed interest in the program, they helped me understand my education benefits and apply for other forms of financial aid and grants if I needed them.

It's very clear throughout the course sessions that the instructors, aides, and mentors want to help you. All you do have to do is ask, and people line up to help you understand a concept or work through a problem. They also help you figure out your ideal career path and the certifications you need to get there.

MyComputerCareer's lifetime career placement services are also an invaluable resource to help you set up interviews and prepare. They continue to keep me informed of new, in-demand certifications and offer refresher courses that can help advance my career.

**A: What was something that surprised you about the civilian workforce?**

**MM:** When you transition into the civilian world, it's important to understand how people see you. After 28 years in the military, I tend to have a very serious expression when I meet people for the first time or interact with others in a professional environment. It took me a while to realize



▶ MARQUEZ AND HIS WIFE AT THE 2019 MARINE CORPS BALL.  
Photo courtesy of Marcelino Marquez

that this could be perceived as intimidating by civilians who were unaware of my background. I am a very friendly person, but my professional demeanor was not showing that side of me, so I had to adjust.

**A: What lessons have you learned throughout your education journey and job search?**

**MM:** Rejections are not the end of the world. Sometimes job opportunities don't work out because it is not the right fit for you. When you are searching for a fulfilling career, don't get sidetracked by rejections. Keep learning and stay positive. Don't give up just because it's difficult.

**A: What advice do you have for transitioning servicemembers and veterans who are considering a career in I.T.?**

**MM:** Start early, plan for contingencies, and know the career path that you want to follow. Many I.T. careers require very specific certifications. Even if you have the knowledge and ability to do a job, you need the certifications to get the role.

Work backwards from your goal to determine what certifications you will need. If you plan ahead, you can get all the certifications you need and get started in a career relatively quickly.

I would also advise any veteran or transitioning servicemember to accept the help and support that is available to you. At the same time, avoid the sense of entitlement that can trick you into thinking you don't have to work hard. You are responsible for your own future. You have to work hard, adapt quickly, and never give up.

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# MAXIMIZE YOUR VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR

**VIRTUAL CAREER FAIRS** offer networking, education exploration, and job opportunities – regardless of your geographic location. RecruitMilitary offers local, regional, and national virtual events. Make the most of your experience with these tips:

## ■ Set the Tone

Just because you're not physically in the room with recruiters and interviewers, it doesn't mean you're not on display. Virtual career fairs offer audio and video presentation tools, so if your initial communication with an employer goes well, you could end up having a one-on-one video interview. Be ready by dressing professionally and setting up your workspace somewhere quiet and well-lit.

Test your video and audio capabilities for interference before the event begins, and make sure the video shows you from the shoulders up, without anything distracting in the background. Make sure your internet connection is strong and reliable.

## ■ Be Prepared

Just like attending a physical career fair, it's important to be prepared before you

begin. Register early and upload your resume. Many organizations screen resumes ahead of time, and you could get an early invitation to visit a specific chat session or a request to schedule a video interview.

Research the companies that will be attending (you can do this right in the virtual career fair platform by visiting their profiles). Decide which companies interest you and review their open positions.

Virtual career fairs offer both public and private chats. Public group chats will skew toward general topics about the company, its culture, and core values, as well as the answers to general questions.

An employer may invite you to a private chat during the event. This gives you a chance to use your elevator pitch, so have yours ready.

Keep in mind that some companies may have a lot of traffic, so be patient.

## ■ Follow-up

The list of employers at a DAV | RecruitMilitary Virtual Career Fair remains active after the event. Click any name on the list and review the "Website and Contact" section of the profile for details. Job listings will also remain active for 60 days after the employer entered them.

If an employer has asked you to apply online, do it – they aren't writing you off. Human Resources protocols often require an applicant to go through the online applicant tracking systems.

The last order of business: Send "thank you" notes to everyone who takes the time to talk to you.



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## Virtual Career Fair Checklist

- ✓ Strong Wi-Fi connection
- ✓ Camera & microphone functionality
- ✓ Quiet, well-lit workspace with nondescript background
- ✓ Professional attire
- ✓ Digital resume file
- ✓ Elevator pitch
- ✓ Questions about specific organizations or roles

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# YOUR EDUCATION SURVIVAL GUIDE

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ADAM O'TOOLE

**SEPARATING FROM THE MILITARY** is an exciting time full of new possibilities, paths, and choices. One of those choices

is pursuing a degree, advanced technical training, or certification.

When I separated from the U.S. Army, I had little interest in going to school, and I had no idea how to utilize my earned education benefits. Two years after I transitioned out of the military, I met with an educational exhibitor at a RecruitMilitary job fair who helped me understand the process of obtaining a degree and helped me realize the potential in doing so.

Knowing how to start my education journey was difficult, but it doesn't have to be. Use these steps to set yourself up for success.

## **Step 1 / Think about what you would like to specialize in, study, or pursue.**

Ideally you will begin this process before you transition out of the military. However, education is a great path to consider even after you've already started a civilian job or career. Researching your desired career path or your ideal role should still be one of the first steps in the process.

If you're overwhelmed or feeling lost, you're not alone. Many students (veterans and civilians alike) choose a broad curriculum or major (think: general studies) to get started. While this is a good way to ease back into being a student, I don't suggest staying on that path for too long - your educational benefits are finite.

If you need some direction, use the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Career-Scope tool to help narrow down the best career path for you: [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/careerscope.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/careerscope.asp).

## **Step 2 / Research educational institutions.**

Whether you know exactly which degree to pursue, or you are still weighing your options, determining which educa-

tional institution to attend is another task to start early.

First and foremost, ensure that your institution of choice is approved by the VA. RecruitMilitary's Education Resource Center can assist you in finding educational institutions that are approved and accredited: <https://recruitmilitary.com/job-seekers/resources/industries/education>.

Then, connect with the veteran's advisor or representative at the institution. Not only will they be able to answer your questions about the school, but they can also help you get your benefits in line.

Find out if the school has a veteran's center or other resource group. Many institutions have recognized the large number of military members and veterans pursuing higher education and have formed veteran support centers on campus or virtually.

## **Step 3 / Know the best program format for your learning style.**

Do you want to take courses online or on campus? Maybe a mix of both? Each format has benefits, and one is not necessarily better than the others. After completing both in-person and online courses, I found that being on campus worked best for me. I performed better when I had in-person access to professors and teaching assistants, administrative offices, student study areas, and other on-campus resources.

What works for someone else may not work for you. Do your research and determine the best option for your lifestyle.

## **Step 4 / Apply for admission.**

Once you have determined where you want to attend, connect with the veteran's advisor to see if the school has any special waivers for military or veteran students - many schools waive application fees for veteran students or offer transfer credits for military coursework and training.

Next, compile all of your transcripts (including for military training), as well as your high school diploma or G.E.D. records.

## **Step 5 / Consider applying for financial aid and/or grants.**

Utilizing your military benefits does not prohibit you from applying for financial aid or grants. You are still permitted to use these resources like any other student, and I encourage you to see if you qualify.

You could be eligible for low- or no-interest student loans, or you may even qualify for state and federal grants which do not need to be paid back. Applying for aid or grants does not mean you are obligated to accept them - you can accept or decline any of the options that are determined to be available to you.

Ask plenty of questions as you go through this step. Understand exactly how the process works, how much aid you will be accepting, the type of loans, interest rates, and when you must start paying back loans.

You can complete the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) here: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

## **Step 6 / Utilize refresher courses or programs.**

It's probably been a while since you've been in a civilian classroom environment. You may need a refresher on certain courses or concepts. Fortunately, there are organizations and programs that exist for this exact purpose.

Some of these programs are free, but others require you to use your benefits or pay out-of-pocket. Thoroughly research each program and find the best one for you. I recommend looking into the Warrior to Scholar program and Veterans Upward Bound.

Pursuing education after military service can seem overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. When you prepare well, ask the right questions, and do your research, a degree or certificate is well within your reach.

\*\*\*

*Adam O'Toole is director of partner relations at Bradley-Morris/RecruitMilitary and a veteran of the U.S. Army.*

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# Veterans Make an Impact in the Solar Industry

**VETERANS COMPRISE 7.8 PERCENT OF THE SOLAR INDUSTRY WORKFORCE – ABOVE THE NATIONAL VETERAN EMPLOYMENT LEVEL. THAT'S BECAUSE SERVICEMEMBERS ARE UNIQUELY FIT FOR THE WORK THAT WE DO.**

Your leadership skills, passion, and ability to think quickly aligns with our mission to create a planet run by the sun. Veterans inherently know how to be the guide for our customers and work together to build a better world.

## SUCCESS AT SUNRUN

There are many options for veterans looking to transition from active duty into the corporate world. Sunrun prioritizes supporting veterans that work in clean energy and those seeking to join. Lee Rodrigues, U.S. Army veteran and one of Sunrun's senior instructional designers, speaks about his experience transitioning from the military into the workforce, and why he chooses to build his career in clean energy at Sunrun.

### What were you looking for when you transitioned out of the military?

**LR:** When I was on active duty with the U.S. Army, I felt like I was part of a larger mission working to solve the big problems and making the world a better and safer place. I felt empowered and didn't want to lose that when I transitioned into the corporate workforce.

### How does your role at Sunrun allow you to contribute to a larger mission?

**LR:** At Sunrun, we are modernizing the grid through distributed energy resources. This creates a more resilient grid infrastructure in the face of increasing energy prices and extreme weather events. It also means stronger domestic security and power flex-

ibility by reducing dependency on centralized grid infrastructure and fossil fuels.

### What would you tell fellow veterans about working in this industry?

**LR:** I think most important to me was that the clean energy sector provides reliable jobs. Once you learn how to install solar, you can be installing and maintaining systems that are going to be around for 20+ years. That's not just a job, that's a career.

## JOINING THE TEAM

Once you are part of the Sunrun team, we will always provide the support you need to thrive. Sunrun participates in various programs to recruit and retain U.S. veterans, including a veteran referral program, military base job fair partnership development, veteran workforce programs, and apprenticeship programs. In addition, our Veteran Employee Resource Group serves as a national support group for Sunrun veterans and their families. Creating an environment that is friendly for veterans and empowers veterans to use the skillset they have cultivated during service is important to all of us at Sunrun.

If you are passionate about making an impact, we welcome you to join nearly 4,000 (and growing) Sunrunners as we power through on our mission to create a planet run by the sun.

**Are you ready to Power Your Career at Sunrun? Visit <https://careers-sunrun.icims.com> to search current openings.**



**"In the Army, no matter how hard things got, I knew that everything I did was in support of a larger mission. I get that same feeling working at Sunrun, where our mission is to create a planet run by the sun."**

**– Lee Rodrigues**  
U.S. Army Veteran  
& Senior Instructional Designer | San Francisco, CA

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# Adversity Tempers Steel

## How Grit Helps Us Through Unprecedented Challenges



SHANNON HUFFMAN POLSON

### “Adversity tempers steel.”

These are the words that Karen Fine Brasch read above the entrance to the Navy Aviation Officer Candidate School when she arrived as “a fish out of water.” As a self-described “Texas co-ed,” she had a lot to learn, academically and physically. When she couldn’t get over a wall that was a part of a required obstacle course, she and a few other female candidates recognized the concrete wall in the barracks shower was about the same height. Every night they practiced running at the concrete block wall until they pulled themselves up and over.

Brasch was one of the first women to fly in the U.S. Navy. Physical obstacles were ultimately the least of her concerns. Over the course of her military career (she retired as a commander), Brasch learned the truth of that phrase emblazoned on the gates at Officer Candidate School.

In a literal sense, the quote refers to the process of strengthening iron-based alloys. A pure metal will bend under the heat, but the alloys become stronger. The idea is popular among philosophers, innovators, and leaders, and for good reason.

### / The Grit Factor

After my own military experience in the U.S. Army flying Apache helicopters, I became fascinated by the idea of overcoming adversity, specifically for women who excelled in roles only recently opened to them. I interviewed and researched dozens of leaders and pulled my findings together in my book, *The Grit Factor: Courage, Resilience and Leadership in the Most Male Dominated Organization in the World*.

In nearly every interview, I found that the leaders who succeeded despite the odds in challenging roles had something in common: They were able to view difficulty as opportunity. They had grit.

The combination of economic downturn due to a global pandemic and social in-

stability has resulted in lack of clarity, increased anxiety, and overwhelming challenges for people in nearly every industry. Many employees are being forced to adapt to new roles and responsibilities as organizations pivot to stay viable. For transitioning servicemembers, this time may be even more overwhelming and confusing.

How can grit help us through this?

### / Grit in Action

My research into grit and adversity culminated in founding The Grit Institute and discovering the triad of skills needed to excel through adversity. Adversity must be met with the triangle of understanding the past, engaging in the present, and looking toward the future.

#### 1 | Commit

Commitment, in this sense, means working to understand and connect with your past, your story, and your core purpose. Commitment forces you to reflect and recall examples of when you have faced challenges and overcome them, as well as the sources of strength you found for support.

You have plenty of examples of overcoming challenges during your military service. Use this method to commit to the challenges that lie ahead and allow your experiences to form the foundation for the next steps in the grit triad.

#### 2 | Learn

Learning, or engaging in the present, is exactly what Brasch did when faced with the literal obstacle in her path. She looked for creative solutions to her problems, took action in the areas where she had some agency, and took responsibility in the areas where she had control. Notably, she did this with others. Connecting to others in times of challenge is another critical success component, whether it is in a supportive peer relationship or extending a hand to help.

Focus on the art and skill of listening.

Listen and learn as much as you can from other veterans and take note of the lessons you learn yourself along the way.

#### 3 | Launch

The last side of the triangle is launch - or looking toward the future.

The Stockdale paradox, named for Vietnam prisoner of war Admiral James Stockdale, asserts that those who survive (and even thrive) through difficult change look to the future with grounded optimism.

Grounded optimism is different than optimism without bounds. This kind of optimism requires faith that there will be an end to darkness, even if the specifics are unknown. In this environment of unprecedented challenges, grounded optimism can help you excel through adversity.

This might mean looking forward to an event in the future that is safely within the realm of possibility or making plans even with a diminished locus of control. When transitioning into the civilian workforce, it could mean maintaining optimism that you will find a suitable role, even if it looks different than you expected.

Grit is a muscle that you strengthen with time and practice. As you build your grit through adversity, you are also scripting new stories to use as sources of strength for the challenges to come. This combination of commitment, learning, and launching into a challenging journey is the prescription for not simply weathering adversity, but perhaps even tempering it in the same way it tempers us.

\*\*\*

*Shannon Huffman Polson is founder and CEO of The Grit Institute, a leadership development organization dedicated to ethical, people-centered leadership. She is one of the first women to fly the Apache helicopter in the U.S. Army, and a veteran of the corporate world as well. She is the author of The Grit Factor: Courage, Resilience and Leadership in the Most Male Dominated Organization in the World.*

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▲ MILITARY VETERANS DIVERSITY NETWORK MEMBERS IN MORRISTOWN, NJ ORGANIZED TWO HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILD EVENTS IN NOVEMBER 2019. Photo courtesy of Travelers Insurance

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If that's more than you imagined in an insurance career, it's time to join us at Travelers.

## HOW WE VALUE VETERANS

At Travelers, we greatly value the leadership, discipline, and skills that transitioning military servicemembers bring to our company. Working with us provides the training to transition into a new career, the rewards you deserve for top performance, and every opportunity to succeed as part of our growing community of veterans.

We also understand that the transition into a civilian career is not always easy. That's where our more than 3,000-member Military and Veterans Diversity Network comes in. Here, you'll find the camaraderie and resources you need to ensure your success as you rise through the ranks.

**To learn more about opportunities at Travelers, join our talent community: [travelers.com/militarynetwork](https://travelers.com/militarynetwork).**

## MEET OUR VETERANS

### Lisa Kopitzke

- *Advanced Analytics Information Technology Center of Excellence Lead*
- *Team Rubicon Disaster Response Volunteer*
- *U.S. Army Veteran*

Lisa Kopitzke spent four years as an Army Medic in Augsburg, Germany and Fort Hood, Texas before joining Travelers. "I was thrilled to be recruited by such a supportive team that acknowledged the discipline and focus I cultivated in the military," she said.

"In the active military, I was in the medical field," Kopitzke continued. "Every sin-

gle day I draw upon that skillset of helping others and growing in my servant leadership skills. I'm also proud to be a member of our Military and Veterans Diversity Network and can feel the immense backing of such a large, caring community."

Kopitzke's servant leadership was evident when she volunteered to assist the victims of 2017's disastrous hurricane season. Team Rubicon was seeking veterans, medical personnel, and civilians to provide boots-on-the-ground support, and Kopitzke answered the call.

### Matt Brode

- *Scrum Master – Claim Intelligent Automation*
- *U.S. Army Veteran*
- *U.S. Army Reserve Member*

Matt Brode was recruited to Travelers while he was still serving in the military. After learning more about what Travelers had to offer, he could see that there were multiple options immediately available along with noticeable room for growth.

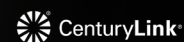
"The confidence and skills I've obtained from the Army translate to the civilian world," he said. "Working within a team, leadership, promptness, calculating risk, and communication are just some of the skills that you develop as a soldier; skills that are never lost when you leave the service."

"I was quickly connected with mentors who really helped me understand my line of work, as well as the Travelers culture," Brode continued. "Additionally, I attended a Military and Veterans Diversity Network event during my first week and was able to connect with fellow veterans. There isn't a single employee at the company who wouldn't go out of their way to help you."

When Brode was deployed on his second tour of duty with the Army Reserves, he could tell that he was missed by his Travelers team. Packages, emails, and phone calls from his co-workers (even the CEO) were a reminder that he had a great company and great job waiting for him back home.

**Learn more about opportunities for military members, veterans, and spouses by visiting [travelers.com/military](https://travelers.com/military).**

# TRAVELERS



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CenturyLink supports our veterans  
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“I never realized how good my  
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**-Ryan LaMar**

Construction Project Administrator



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- Engineering
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- Management
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# Information Technology

**ACCORDING TO THE U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (BLS)**, the computing and information technology (I.T.) industry is projected to grow 12 percent between 2018 and 2028, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. More than 500,000 new jobs are projected in order to meet the increased demand for cloud computing, information security, and the collection, storage, and analyzation of data.

With the increased reliance on technology and computing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the growth potential for the industry could be higher. A **May 2020 study** from the Deloitte Center for Technology, Media & Telecommunications found that demand for cloud services, cybersecurity, data-sharing, and artificial intelligence have increased for both businesses and direct consumers, a trend that is likely to remain even in a post-pandemic society.

## / VETERANS IN I.T.

Those with a military background in information technology, cyber operations, intelligence analysis, signal operations, network security or maintenance, and other technology-centric roles often find that those experiences give them a head start in their civilian I.T. career.

Even without an extensive I.T. background, veterans' transferrable skills are beneficial in I.T. training and careers. Your discipline, focus, project management skills, and ability to perform under pressure give you an edge in this industry.

## / HOT OPPORTUNITY Computer Programmer

Programmers write and test code for computer applications and software programs. They often work closely with software developers, and in some organizations, the roles overlap. They also test new applications and programs for desired results, and find and fix mistakes.

### Training Required

- Bachelor's degree (in some cases an

associate degree will suffice)

- Network-specific I.T. certifications

### Duties

To read about duties and learn more about this occupation, visit the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Occupational Outlook Handbook at [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh).

## / HOT OPPORTUNITY Web Developer

These roles design and create websites. Some web developers are responsible for both the technical and design aspects of a website. Other developers specialize in a focused aspect of web development, such as back-end (technical construction) development, front-end (design and layout) development, or maintaining, monitoring, and updating sites.

### Training Required

- Varies by organization
- Minimum: high school diploma
- Most common: associate degree in web design or related field

### Duties

To read about duties and learn more about this occupation, visit the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Occupational Outlook Handbook at [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh).

## / HOT OPPORTUNITY Information Security Analyst

Information security analysts plan and deploy security measures to protect computer networks, systems, and data. They also help create and maintain disaster recovery plans and prepare systems for

continued operation in the wake of an emergency or disaster.

### Training required

- Bachelor's degree in computer science or related field
- I.T. security certificates, such as the Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
- Some related experience

### Duties

To read about duties and learn more about this occupation, visit the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Occupational Outlook Handbook at [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh).

## / TIPS FOR SUCCESS

If you are considering a career in information technology, use these tips to prepare:

- **Have a goal.** Many I.T. roles require specific training, so it's important to have a plan for obtaining the accreditations you will need. If your ultimate goal requires several years of related experience, research roles that most commonly advance into the role you desire.
- **Be flexible.** To meet technological demands now and in the future, the I.T. industry is ever-changing. Remain flexible and be willing to learn new certifications, programs, and systems in order to advance your career.

- **Build your network.** Utilize LinkedIn and other networking opportunities to connect with I.T. professionals. Be sure to update your LinkedIn profile as you complete trainings and certifications.



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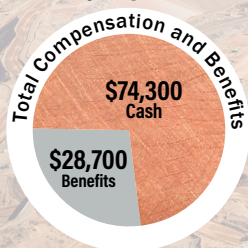
Apply at [FMJobs.net](https://www.FMJobs.net)

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### Diagnostic Electrician

**\$103,000**

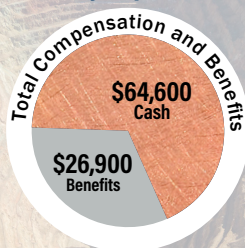
First-year potential



### Industrial Electrician Diesel / Diagnostic Mechanic

**\$91,500**

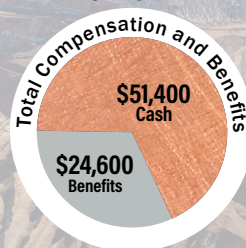
First-year potential



### Diesel Repair Employee

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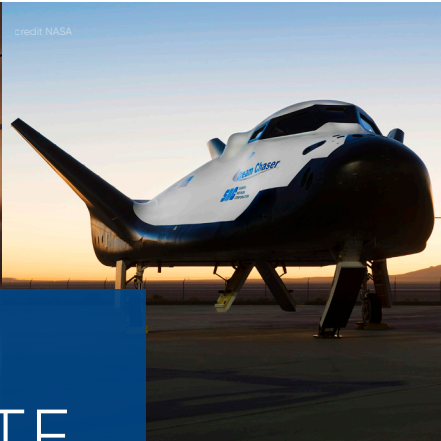
*Across HD Supply, it is an honor and privilege to work shoulder  
to shoulder with our Military Veterans as One Team, Driving  
Customer Success and Value Creation. Thanks to all our  
Veterans for your Service and Sacrifice for our Country and  
for your focus on Improving Our People's Lives.*

– Joe DeAngelo CEO & Chairman

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HD Supply at Shepard's Men  
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# How Transition-Ready Are You?

When it comes to transitioning out of the military, **are you as ready as you think you are?** Use these data and tips from Military-Transition.org to prepare for a successful military-to-civilian transition during an uncertain time.

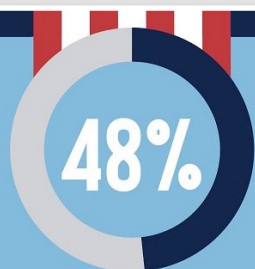
**76%**

of veterans agree when asked if their transition was **stressful**

**52%**

of veterans agree when asked if their transition was **confusing**

High levels of **stress** and **confusion** are common throughout the transition process



The transition from military life into the civilian workforce can be **difficult** for service members and their families

**OF VETERANS INDICATE THEIR TRANSITION WAS MORE DIFFICULT THAN EXPECTED**

**59%**

INDICATE THEIR TRANSITION TOOK MORE **TIME** THAN EXPECTED



Many underestimate the amount of **time** required to successfully transition back into civilian life

Veterans indicate the following were “extremely” or “very” important in their <b>transition process</b>	<b>START EARLY</b> .....	<b>84%</b>
	<b>HAVE A PLAN</b> .....	<b>83%</b>
	<b>NETWORK</b> .....	<b>86%</b>
	<b>TRANSLATE SKILLS</b> .....	<b>83%</b>
	<b>PATIENCE</b> .....	<b>82%</b>

## Start early

The first step in your transition process is knowing when you expect to transition out of the military. Ideally, you should start planning two years before your expiration of term of service (ETS). Take multiple Transition Assistance Program (TAP) classes when possible.

## Have a plan

A written plan does not have to be complex or overly detailed at first. Start with goals and rough timelines and fill in accordingly. Include a section for how you will decide where to live and other factors that will affect your family.

## Network

It is never too early to begin building your network. Utilize LinkedIn and connect with community groups, veterans, and professionals in your desired field. Stay active and update your profile often.

## Translate Skills

Thoroughly translating your skills can be daunting, but the benefits are indisputable. Take the time to learn to translate your military skills into civilian terms and practice with your network.

## Patience

There is no shortcut to reintegrating into civilian life. Be patient, be persistent, and use your resources.

Data and analyses from **WWW.MILITARY-TRANSITION.ORG.**

Visit [www.military-transition.org/participate.html](http://www.military-transition.org/participate.html) to share your military transition experience.



▲ Army veteran and Roche Manager of Talent Acquisition Jamie Wright, left, knew fellow Army veteran Joe Almazni, right, would make a great candidate as a production manager and advocated for Almazni in the hiring process. They are currently working together to develop a high school internship program. ► Wright, U.S. Army veteran and manager of talent acquisition at Roche. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROCHE



# Veterans Match Military Experience to Business Skills

**JAMIE WRIGHT AND JOE ALMAZNI** have a lot in common, even though they only recently met: Both served in leadership roles while on active duty for the U.S. Army, both served part-time in the armed forces while pursuing higher education, and both experienced challenges transitioning from the military to civilian careers.

Now, both are putting their military leadership and job skills to work at Roche Diagnostics Indianapolis.

## The Groundwork for Corporate Careers

After years of participating in Army National Guard missions, Jamie Wright is leading a mission to recruit military-connected talent in his role as manager of talent acquisition. Wright served for a total of six years between the Indiana National Guard and active duty.

Armed with an undergraduate degree in biology and an MBA, Wright wanted a civilian career where he could make a meaningful impact. Several of Wright's family members are affected by diabetes, which ignited his passion to work for an organization that helps people better manage their disease and achieve an improved quality of life. Today, Wright is fulfilling that passion by connecting individuals with a military background to careers at Roche.

Joe Almazni served in the U.S. Army in field artillery for six years, including 18 months in Baghdad, Iraq. After returning to the United States, Almazni served as a

drill instructor and then served three years in the U.S. Army Reserve while attending the University of Miami, graduating with a bachelor's degree in English literature and political science.

After working in production management for two other firms, Almazni applied for a production supervisor position at Roche Diagnostics Indianapolis. As a fellow Army veteran, Wright immediately recognized Almazni's valuable military leadership experience and knew it would directly translate to a position at Roche.

"The position needed someone with demonstrated leadership skills, who was a strong communicator and could inspire a team. Joe's resume distinguished itself. He was both a drill instructor and a non-commissioned officer (NCO) whose primary role was training and teaching soldiers, coaching and instilling confidence in them, and removing barriers so they could thrive," said Wright. "As a former Army NCO, I know only the top 10 percent of all soldiers are drill instructors and represent the 'cream of the crop' in leadership."

Now a production supervisor at Roche Diagnostics, Almazni appreciates working in a collaborative environment where the workforce is both talented and engaged and where people are encouraged to propose new ideas.

"Roche offers a different culture than you find in a typical manufacturing organiza-

tion. The workforce is sophisticated, and researchers and scientists regularly collaborate with the manufacturing team," said Almazni.

## Basic Training for Human Resources Professionals

An important part of Wright's job is educating Roche Human Resources leaders about the transferable skills military servicemembers and veterans possess and helping to interpret military experience to appropriate job openings. He works closely with Roche Veterans Business Resource Group (BRG), an employee-led group that provides support, resources, and education to and about Roche's military-connected workforce. Together, they assist Roche recruiters in identifying opportunities and reaching out to military-connected candidates through appropriate career development channels.

"Military-connected candidates are a natural fit for a corporation; like a business, the military is comprised of different levels and departments, there is ongoing learning and development, and you must be versatile, adaptable, and a team player to succeed," said Wright. "Roche and other corporations need more of the skill sets military candidates offer."

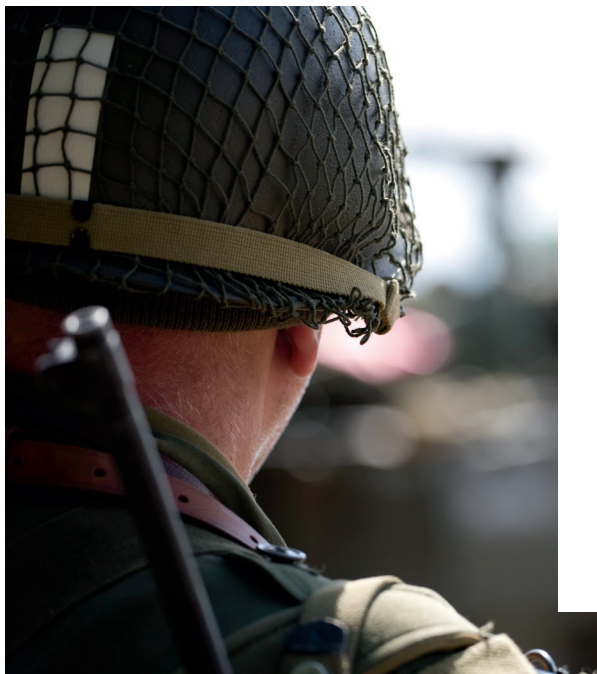
## Translating Military Skills

Just as Wright connected with Almazni, HR professionals at Roche are actively working to engage with military talent and correlate their experience to appropriate job openings. Wright encourages military-connected individuals to translate their experience to the needs of a civilian business to create a well-rounded job application, highlighting:

- Strategy and planning
- Leadership
- Teamwork and partnerships with diverse individuals
- Self-discipline and accountability
- Work ethic
- Community involvement
- Appropriate civilian job skills

To learn more about challenging and rewarding career opportunities for military-connected individuals at Roche Diagnostics, visit [go.roche.com/indyjobs](http://go.roche.com/indyjobs).





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# FIVE TIPS for Returning to the Workplace after COVID-19



KEVIN E. PHILLIPS

## WILL WE EVER RETURN

to pre-COVID-19 work environments? It's a question many have asked and few (if any) have definitively answered. If you have

recently returned to an office after working remotely for an extended period, you have likely seen plenty of changes in the physical environment and how colleagues are able to interact, including mandatory masks, social distancing, physical barriers, and reduced room capacities.

Veterans and military spouses are extremely familiar with shifting environments and regulations. In fact, there are many aspects of your military experience that have prepared you for this unique time in our collective history. Regardless of when it happens, ensure you have a successful transition back to the workplace with these five tips:

**1 | BE PATIENT.** Returning to an office workspace routine is not going to happen overnight. The workplace changes caused by COVID-19 happened abruptly, but the adjustments we had to make took time. In the same way, it will take time to return to a more traditional schedule.

Give yourself time to settle back into this environment without expecting everything to be perfect immediately. Be patient with yourself, your colleagues, and your leaders.

Be patient also with shifting guidelines and restrictions. Uncertainty has been a constant since the beginning of the pandemic. Guidelines change daily in some cases, and organizations with offices in multiple locations will require time to figure out how to safely and effectively re-open offices in compliance with local regulations.

**2 | COMMUNICATE.** Returning to the workplace in this environment will be a first-time experience for everyone, creating plenty of new individual and collective challenges in your workplace. Place increased effort into connecting with your manager, as well as colleagues you work closely with on a regular basis. This will minimize the stress, confusion, and fear that could arise when returning to the workplace and limit potential issues or misunderstandings.

Some organizations may bring employees back to the office in a part-time or hybrid manner. Due to social distancing regulations, conference rooms may not accommodate teams or meetings the way they have in the past. Be prepared to maintain remote communication methods even when you return to an office environment.

**3 | RECALIBRATE.** Do not fall back into old habits simply because they are comfortable. Getting back to the office may mean a return to some "normalcy," but take note of the ways you have grown both professionally and personally.

Did you learn a method for being productive with distractions at home? Maybe you started exercising in the morning or reading industry newsletters in the time you would have been commuting to the office. Do not lose these positive changes you have implemented. Instead, identify ways to adapt and evolve your office routine to incorporate them.

Maybe you had the opposite experience and returning to the office means re-embracing a more productive routine and better work (and life) habits. Either way, come back with a refreshed attitude and focus, and find ways to use the lessons you have learned in the past six months to advance your career, use your

talents more effectively, and improve yourself.

**4 | ASK FOR HELP.** Do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Returning to the office could present personal and professional challenges that you did not anticipate. Reach out to your supervisors or human resources department when you need support. Your company is invested in your success; there may be resources in place that can help ease any challenges that could materialize due to the transition back to the workplace.

Use your support networks when you need them, and do not be shy about asking for help or posing legitimate questions to leadership. There is no clear and certain path to success in returning to the office and nobody has all of the answers, but unless you ask, your leaders and human resources professionals may be unaware of your concerns.

**5 | ACCEPT CHANGE.** The world as we have always known it is gone, and the notion that life will ever completely return to the way it used to be is not practical. Rather than fight this reality, we must embrace it.

For many veterans, this may feel similar to coming back from a deployment. Adjusting to new regulations, changes in personnel, and new responsibilities required us to be flexible. While our jobs largely remained the same on and off deployment, adjusting to a different environment and the reality of each situation took acceptance, flexibility, and time.

The same is true in this situation. Accept the changes that have taken place and prepare for the fact that more changes are likely. If you accept that nothing is certain or permanent, you may find that adjusting to the next big change will be less daunting.

\*\*\*

Kevin E. Phillips is a U.S. Air Force veteran and author of two books: *Managing Millennials* and *Employee LEAPS: Leveraging Engagement by Applying Positive Strategies*.

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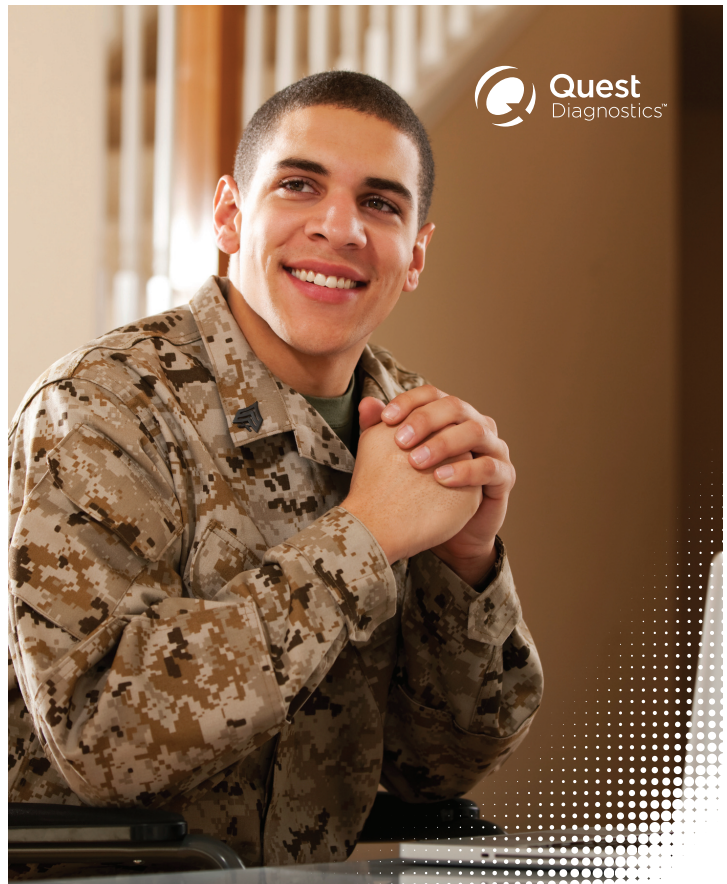
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# Committed to Care. Inspired by Service.

Meet **Terry Leon**, a veteran working to make a difference at NYU Langone Health.

## IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT U.S. NAVY VETERAN

Terry Leon has touched the lives of many during her 22-year career with NYU Langone Health. But what makes her story remarkable isn't just a career that stood the test of time; it's her dedication to serving others every day.

Leon, a New York native, has always had heart, grit, and an attitude of relentlessness. It's that same fight and passion to serve that led her to the military. As a medical corpsman in the U.S. Navy, Leon's duties ranged from inpatient care to physical therapy, and even pediatrics.

After her service, Leon returned home with a purpose and inner strength that would take her on the journey of a lifetime. For many disabled veterans, finding civilian career opportunities can be challenging. But Leon is resourceful, and she refused to quit seeking an opportunity where she knew she could make an impact.

## FROM LESSON TO LIFESTYLE

During her vocational rehabilitation work, Leon began taking classes at Hunter College. What started as an assignment would quickly turn into a calling. After writing a paper about altruism for a psychology course, Leon decided she wanted to give back to her community through volunteer work, and she knew the local VA Hospital was the perfect place. What she didn't know was the group she would be volunteering with was part of NYU Langone Health, and this group would soon become her work family.

Leon's volunteering efforts impressed group leaders so much so that at the end of her internship, she was offered positions at both the VA Hospital and NYU Langone. She ultimately chose the role with NYU Langone, due to the opportunities for continued education.

NYU Langone Health is committed to creating an environment that honors and empowers those who served by providing comprehensive benefits, including continuing education. Leon now has hopes to pursue her doctorate degree with NYU. With programs like The Cohen Family Clinic, the Veteran's Resource Group, and the Veterans Mentorship Program, veterans are fully supported well



**TERRY LEON, MS, RN**

beyond their career transition at NYU Langone.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Today, Leon serves as a senior research coordinator in NYU Langone's Department of Psychiatry. One of her main projects is conducting clinical research on ADHD. Leaning on her experience as a medical corpsman, Leon has confidence in caring for adults throughout the full lifespan - from adolescent teens to the elderly. Leon is committed to treating her patients with care and respect. When explaining her current role and its importance to the overall healthcare experience, Leon said, "We're not promising our patients treatments, but we are promising them care. It's important to do that because our first concern in research is the patient's health and rights."

## LEADING WITH CARE

Managing a staff eager to make a difference helps Leon keep the focus on the patient. She enjoys managing a large group of non-traditional volunteers; NYU's future doctors, nurses, psychologists, and researchers.

Never one to forget the opportunity that paved the way for her, it brings Leon great joy to provide the same opportunity for others. "Volunteering is such a gracious act. We're so lucky to have volunteers shadowing on these projects and their participation is much appreciated," said Leon.

From collecting data points to managing both sponsor and investigative initi-

ated trials, each step of Leon's process is done with the patient in mind.

Even amidst a pandemic, Leon and her diverse team's dedication and loyalty remain paramount. Leon leans on many of the intangible skills that the military instilled in her, including mission-completion. "If there is work to be done, then we will make sure it is completed," she said.

Though COVID-19 has impacted much of the research Leon's team conducts, it has not impacted their commitment. Every day the team works remotely to ready the patient studies and complete previous studies' writing projects. With the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 in the immediate future, it is a test of sheer determination for Leon and her team.

## A MEANINGFUL CAREER

For Leon, working at NYU Langone Health has been incredibly fulfilling. Leon greatly appreciates the benefits available to her as a veteran, the opportunities to touch lives, and the company culture that values transparency and professionalism.

Leon encourages fellow veterans to follow her path in joining NYU Langone. "Reach out to employers and ask if you can volunteer," she said. Leon serves as a mentor to junior staff and has her own mentor within the organization, so she also recommends veterans find someone who can encourage them throughout their civilian career journey.

The NYU Langone team is grateful for Leon and is continually encouraged by her boldness and the passion-driven care she effortlessly displays. Leon's ability to motivate, uplift, and empower others makes her a valued member of the NYU Langone organization.

Learn more about careers at NYU Langone Health and how you can make an impact on the lives of others in an environment that will allow your skills to shine. Visit <https://jobs.nyulangone.org>.





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Cintas is dedicated to hiring veterans, and we take this even further by providing support that helps ensure a successful transition from military service to a career with our company.

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If you're interested in learning more, please visit [militarytransition.bankofamerica.com](https://militarytransition.bankofamerica.com).



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# Six Secrets to a Successful Transition

LIKE EVERY LARGESCALE LIFE CHANGE, TRANSITIONING FROM THE MILITARY TO THE CIVILIAN WORLD CAN BE A SCARY AND STRESSFUL PROCESS. IT PROBABLY FEELS LIKE THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF WAYS YOUR TRANSITION COULD GO WRONG.



JENNY NICHOLS

There is a misconception that veterans won't have any difficulty finding a civilian job. But as most will come to realize, there is a lot of work behind a successful transition. Even with military experience and a college degree, finding the right career can be complicated.

Here are some secrets to streamlining your transition to civilian life.

## 1 | LEARN TO S.T.O.P.

Transitioning from the military to a civilian career can be a stressful time filled with anxiety, apprehension, and at its worst, even panic attacks. In times such as these, it's good to STOP: Sit, Think, Observe, and Plan. You may recognize this method as an exercise usually used in life-or-death situations, but it works here as well.

When you're heading out into the civilian world, take a moment to visualize your options, do your research, and formulate a plan that you can stick to over the long-term. Being flexible in these circumstances is a good thing, but you still need structure. Visualizing what a successful transition looks like can help you put your plans in motion when you are feeling uncertain.

## 2 | BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Building and nurturing good relationships can open up new opportunities. As you know from your military experience, nothing is accomplished in a vacuum. It takes a team of people to carry out a plan, and opportunities often evolve through relationships.

Utilize LinkedIn to build your network and nurture connections by commenting and sharing relevant posts or reaching out to contacts via a direct message. Connect with veterans that have already made the transition to the civilian world; ask about their transition and what worked for them.

## MYCOMPUTER CAREER

### 3 | SELF-EVALUATE

It's important to evaluate yourself and identify any gaps you have in your professional network and skillset. Take stock of areas in which you can improve.

Can you effectively communicate your value to a hiring manager? Do you have gaps in the hard skills required for the role you are after? If so, how can you fill those gaps?

Meet with recruiters and employment managers and get as much feedback from them as possible. It's a good idea to continually solicit feedback and use it as a catalyst for continuous self-improvement. Feedback is the breakfast of champions.

### 4 | DROP THE MILITARY JARGON

While this isn't necessarily a secret, there's a reason so many experts advise avoiding military jargon when transitioning to a civilian career. This one step can make a huge difference in your job search.

Present your job title, skills, and experience in a way that everyone can understand. If you use the terms you learned in the service, there's a strong chance that employers may not know or understand what you are talking about and you could be missing out on some great opportunities. The Department of Labor's **Military Skills Translator** can help you do this.

### 5 | TAILOR YOUR RESUME FOR THE JOB

Veterans are generally entrusted with a great deal of responsibility and usually operate in a variety of roles throughout their military careers. It shows you are capable of doing multiple tasks (HR, logistics, operations, management, etc.) in a ci-

vilian role as well. And while this is entirely true, listing each experience can backfire in the job hunt if it means your resume is unfocused or too long.

Once you decide on a career path, trim your resume to showcase the skills and experiences that best fit the roles you'll be pursuing. Otherwise, you may end up with a several-page-long resume that nobody will read. It's important to keep in mind that companies receive hundreds of resumes at a time. Every word on your resume should be relevant to the job for which you are applying.

### 6 | DON'T IGNORE CERTIFICATIONS

When a company posts a job opening, they are immediately bombarded by hundreds of resumes. To increase your chances of being hired, you need to have the right skills and often the certifications that prove you've mastered those skills. Certifications also represent your commitment and determination, making you a safer and more reliable choice in the eyes of an employer.

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Remember that job-hunting takes time and effort. You will have good days and bad days. Think of your job search as a mission and use your tactical patience to stay focused on the objective: a great career.

Learn more about MyComputerCareer and get started on your new career today at [www.mycomputercareer.edu/military](http://www.mycomputercareer.edu/military).

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Jenny Nichols is an executive director at MyComputerCareer. She holds advanced degrees in higher education and student development as well as national certifications for resume writing, editing, career coaching, and facilitating career development.

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# A Day in the Life of an I.T. Professional

## What does a regular day look like?

There is not necessarily a “regular” day in this role; Every day is different. My job is to build and maintain Salesforce instances for RecruitMilitary’s teams. Every team has unique Salesforce needs and processes, which means I encounter different challenges each day. It’s never boring!

## What skills did you learn in the military that help you in your civilian career?

Project management and time management are two skills that I gained in the military and continue to use every day in my civilian career. Other soft skills that veterans learn in the military like leadership, communication, and a strong focus on mission-completion are also huge advantages in an I.T. career.

## What are some challenges of being a veteran in this industry?

There is a common misconception

**JOSH DAYMENT**  
U.S. Army Veteran  
*Salesforce Administrator*  
**RecruitMilitary**



that a strong technical background is required to get started in this industry, which often discourages veterans with other backgrounds from pursuing an I.T. career. The truth is that you can have a different background and still learn the necessary skills for a successful career. I was a paratrooper in the Army and started my civilian career in sales before I transitioned into this role.

## What’s the most rewarding aspect of your job?

My job is to build tools to help my colleagues be successful in our mission to

connect employers with transitioning servicemembers, veterans, and spouses. It’s rewarding to play a role in helping fellow veterans.

## What advice do you have for veterans considering a career in the I.T. industry?

Utilize LinkedIn to build your network with I.T. professionals and veterans in the industry. Reach out to people who are already in roles that appeal to you and ask them how they got started. Don’t let the fear of learning specific skillsets discourage you from seeking a career in the industry.



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# Casting Vision Like the Military

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**TIM BEST**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Bradley-Morris/RecruitMilitary  
U.S. Army Veteran

I had a pretty specific idea of how this would look and I was ready to get everyone on the leadership team involved so we could turn the vision into action. But that's not exactly what happened.

I'm humbled to say that what we are working on now is much better than my original vision, and it is due to the team coming together, having hard conversations, and working through a ton of healthy conflict.

In the private sector, we think of "vision" as the high-level mission plan for the organization and we think of "mission" to describe what we do. In the Army, the vision is very similar to the mission, which is the high-level plan for the organization as it moves forward.

I believe in using a similar format to the Army's Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP) to develop that vision and/or mission plan in the private sector.

The MDMP has seven key steps that can easily be applied to the decision-making process for a company like ours, that is trying to innovate, evolve, and cast a vision for the future.

## Step 1 | Receipt of Mission

This is the initial vision and usually outcome based. With the current economic instability, many companies are just trying to stay afloat. This goes beyond that and asks "what do we want to look like on the other side of this?"

## Step 2 | Mission Analysis

Once the vision has become clear, create a committee to tackle each part of that vision. Each leader (department heads in our case) will work together to

think about how to organize efforts to start working towards that vision.

## Step 3 | Course of Action Development

The Course of Action (COA) can be broken into four parts: development, analysis, comparison, and approval. In business, you might roll all of this into one phase.

COA development is the phase when plans are evolving, and different methods are being considered. In this stage, healthy conflict may begin to rise. That is not a bad thing – healthy conflict can bring new insights and strategies to the surface.

## Step 4 | Course of Action Analysis

When the committee is considering different costs, the scalability of a project, and all the business factors involved for each method, the COA is in the analysis phase. This step is detail-heavy and includes determining specifics and measures of success for each item.

## Step 5 | Course of Action Comparison

Once the team has collected data and analyzed methods, it's time to bring it all back. In this step, the methods being considered will be refined. The model will be taking shape. Conducting market research and customer calls should happen in this step.

A good format is the V2MOM (Vision, Values, Methods, Obstacles, and Measures) model to ensure the vision stays in line with mission goals.

## Step 6 | Course of Action Approval

When you've determined the requirements, listened to the customers, and know the measures for success, the

COA is ready for approval.

Our COA approval is a shared document that allows those on the committee to add comments and ask questions, keeping the project rolling forward. We currently use this as our internal FAQ, but eventually this document will be used externally.

## Step 7 | Orders Production, Dissemination, and Transition

To be effective as a leader, General Jim Mattis says you must ask: "What do I know? Who needs to know? Have I told them?" When military orders are produced, even the newest private knows their part of that mission.

To do this, start with an internal rollout to familiarize the workforce with the execution plan. That execution plan includes everything from approved language to specific assignments to measurements of success. Part of this process should also include a feedback loop (in the Army it's called an after action review). Then execute the mission.

Remember, something will always go differently than planned. **Contingency planning** prepares you to embrace the unexpected and continue to process-improve as you move towards the vision.

Following a model like the MDMP allows you to proceed with confidence knowing that your mission and vision are aligned, your team is informed, and your execution plan is thorough. All that's left to do is take action.

\*\*\*

*Tim Best is CEO of Bradley-Morris/RecruitMilitary and a former U.S. Army Special Forces aviation pilot.*



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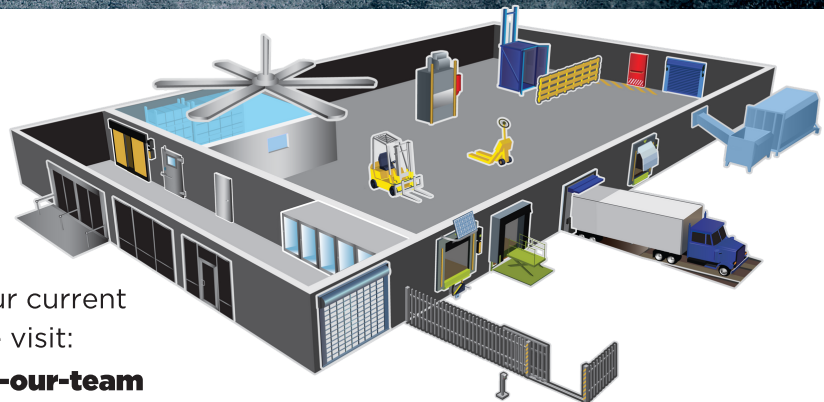
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