



Leading Practices for Identifying and Supporting Military Spouses

In order to recruit, hire and provide employment continuity for military spouses at the time of relocation, more than 200 employers have joined the Military Spouse Employment Partnership, or MSEP, to share information, strategies and connections. Some of the leading practices used by MSEP partners to reach their goals are listed below.

Spouse Ambassador Network

The Spouse Ambassador Network is a collection of organizations within MSEP who have established community networks and want to leverage these networks to broaden knowledge about military spouse employment resources.

Military Spouse Employment Partnership employers successfully connect with Spouse Ambassador Network organizations. These organizations are strong advocates for the needs of military families and spouses. They offer job readiness, career coaching and mentoring services for career-minded spouses from all military services and pay grades. Spouse Ambassador Network organizations promote spouse education and training, licensing and credentialing portability and career advancement opportunities for spouses in portable career fields and occupations. They also promote “hot job” leads through their social media channels and refer spouses to MSEP employers who are committed to recruiting, hiring, promoting and retaining them. Spouse Ambassador Network organizations are an important bridge to the military spouse community. As an MSEP employer, you will want to work with MSEP Spouse Ambassador Network organizations to promote your company and job opportunities.

Spouse Ambassador Network organizations have extensive military spouse communication networks and help MSEP partners in the following ways:

- ★ Reach directly into the military spouse community to deliver the latest education, career and employment opportunity information
- ★ Provide military spouse employees with career coaching, mentoring services and referrals to time-sensitive job information, helpful career resources and employment support programs
- ★ Refer potential mentors to Spouse Ambassador Network spouse mentoring programs such as Military Spouse eMentor and Business and Professional Women’s Foundation.

Spouse Ambassador Network organizations are listed below:

- ★ Academy Women (Military Spouse eMentor Program)
- ★ Association of the United States Army (AUSA – information sharing and advocacy)
- ★ Blue Star Families (Blue Star Networks and Blue Star Job Programs)
- ★ Business and Professional Women’s Foundation (BPW’s Joining Forces for Women Veterans & Military Spouses Mentoring Plus™)
- ★ Hiring Our Heroes (U.S. Chamber of Commerce hiring fairs, military spouse business alliance mentoring services and military spouse networking and hiring events)
- ★ In Gear Career (military spouse mentoring, information sharing and job connections)
- ★ Military Officers’ Association of America (MOAA – information sharing and job connections)
- ★ Military Spouse of the Year (Military Spouse of the Year award)
- ★ Military Spouse Corporate Career Network (MSCCN – career services and networking)
- ★ Military Spouse Foundation (Military spouses providing one-on-one mentoring, community discussions and expert forums with a focus on career planning and entrepreneurship)
- ★ Military Spouse JD Network (network of military spouse legal professionals, mentoring and job connections)
- ★ National Military Family Association (NMFA scholarships, information sharing and advocacy)
- ★ Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program (SECO career services, tools, resources and information)

Strategies for reaching out to the military spouse community

The following strategies are currently being used by MSEP partners to identify military spouses during the recruitment and on-boarding processes. These strategies will help MSEP partners support their military spouse employees and meet their MSEP reporting requirements.

Walgreens and Volt asked the following questions on their job applications in an effort to identify qualified military spouses for recruitment, retention and promotion purposes.

- ★ Are you a veteran? Disabled veteran? Military spouse? (yes/no)
- ★ How did you learn about this job opportunity? (One answer option for this question is MSEP.)
- ★ “Source” check box and “Referred by” check box (One answer option for this questions is MSEP.)

Volt uses a survey tool to identify military spouses in their current workforce. Survey results help Volt identify pay, location and job title information so they can more effectively promote portable, transferrable careers.

Dozens of MSEP partners participate in U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes hiring fairs, including events that are designed specifically for military spouses. At these special events, MSEP partners provide resume assistance, interview advice, dress for success tips, one-on-one career consultations, and employment tips that tell spouses what MSEP employers are looking for and how they want spouses to self-identify. The MSEP partners are also referring military spouses to industry and MSEP partners when they do not have an open position.

AT&T established a Business Exchange for referring talented individuals to industry and MSEP partners.

Strategies for providing employment continuity for military spouse employees

AT&T established affinity groups and business resource units that facilitate networking among military spouses. These groups are formed around common interests and goals such as networking. They support and promote career advancement, mentoring, and business and community service opportunities for group members. They also recognize the contributions members are making to their employer, local communities and national defense.

The Apollo Group offers scholarships for military spouses.

Columbia Southern University and Waldorf College offers distance education and on-campus scholarships specifically for military spouses. They are encouraging their network of higher education partners to do the same. Such scholarships are included in the Military Spouse Scholarship Database located at <https://MySECO.militaryonesource.mil>.

Blackstone Career Institute offers tuition reimbursement as a benefit of employment for military spouses.

Sykes offers a Talent Sprout Program that provides free training to military spouse employees in an effort to prepare them for the new knowledge economy. Talent Sprout is a fast track path to upward mobility opportunities.

The Navy Exchange Service Command, Army & Air Force Exchange Service and Defense Commissary Agency have long-standing employment continuity programs that help military spouses find and maintain career opportunities at their facilities worldwide. Their goal is to keep high performing military spouses in their workforce despite the challenges of relocation and deployment.

More and more MSEP partners believe military spouses are ideal for their virtual business models because modern technologies have made it possible for employees to perform their duties from a variety of geographic locations using flexible work schedules, including work from home. The shift to a virtual workforce is resulting in lower recruiting, training, retention, travel and facility costs for many employers.

The MSEP partners with facilities on or near military installations are acknowledging the contributions military spouses make to their workforce, their community and to national defense during special events such as career, family and resource fairs. Some make donations (for example, food, beverages, products and free services) to support military command events that welcome troops home from deployment. Others give their military spouse employees the flexibility they need to spend time with their families before a deployment, as well as after a deployment. Some

employers host special events that recognize and thank their military spouse employees for their on-going sacrifices and service to this nation. Some events are held on the following days:

- ★ Military Spouse Appreciation Day (celebrated in May on the Friday before Mother's Day)
- ★ Memorial Day (celebrated on the last Monday of May)
- ★ Veterans Day (November 11)
- ★ National Military Family Appreciation Month (November)

Strategies for sharing MSEP leading practices

The LinkedIn MSEP Partner Group is an online networking group open only to MSEP partner employers (http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4445979&trk=myg_ugrp_ovr). New and Enduring MSEP partners come together to share MSEP leading practices, lessons learned, recruitment strategies, resources, tools and our latest collateral materials. They engage in discussions on hot topics of interest, including the following:

- ★ Social media, LinkedIn 101 and other webinars
- ★ Best ways to promote your company and "hot job" leads
- ★ Participation in military installation events
- ★ Hosting local and regional networking events
- ★ Job fair display table resources and information resume translations – bridging the gap between military and corporate work experience
- ★ Tips for interviewing a military spouse
- ★ Navigating the MSEP Career Portal
- ★ Portable careers and transferrable skills
- ★ Keeping valued military spouse employees within your organization at the time of relocation
- ★ Military spouse referrals to industry and MSEP partners
- ★ Support for military spouses during a service member's deployment
- ★ Military spouse-nominated employer awards
- ★ New MSEP and SECO resources, collateral materials and tool kits
- ★ The MSEP account managers' assistance to partners

Strategies for staying connected

The MSEP account manager is your primary point of contact for staying connected to the latest information and support resources needed to leverage the power of MSEP partnerships. The account managers are ready to help MSEP partners reach military spouse recruitment and retention goals. Call 877-940-6737 for support.

