

DAV NEWS SERVICE

National Communications Department, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, Ohio 45250-0301
A monthly selection of news and feature subjects of interest to DAV members and their families.

Provided to include in DAV Department and Chapter newsletters.
Please read "DAV Washington Update" at your next Chapter Meeting.

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Veterans in the Workforce

Arthur H. Wilson, National Adjutant

One of the most critical issues in America right now is unemployment, and veterans are being hit even harder than non-veterans.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the overall veterans' unemployment rate is hovering at 9.9 percent. For Iraq- and Afghanistan-era veterans ages 18 to 24, that figure is much higher, estimated at 26 percent to 30 percent.

Veterans aren't getting hired or keeping jobs partly because many employers know little or nothing about the military and those who serve in it. With just 1 percent of Americans serving in the military and about 10 percent reporting that they even know anyone in the military, we are becoming even more isolated from the private sector. Not nearly enough is known about veterans' capabilities.

Worse yet, many veterans do not understand their own abilities; specifically, how the skills and knowledge they learned in uniform can transfer to gainful employment once they hang that uniform up. When reaching out to recently discharged veterans, we must do a better job of helping them analyze their skill sets, develop career goals and adapt to the civilian work force.

We need to educate our communities' business leaders and human resources professionals on the immense value that veterans can bring to any team, focusing on the intangibles, such as strong leadership traits, the ability to follow orders and the understanding of working toward a cause much greater than oneself.

We have excellent Transition Service Officers and National Service Officers helping with this, but we need this issue to be at the forefront of every member's mind in order to really help. If we're going to have an impact, it has to happen in the local communities. That's where the help is needed.

The Chamber, together with the Labor Department's Veterans Employment and Training Service, is hosting 100 job fairs across the country aiming to engage large corporations as well as small businesses and veteran-owned companies. These job fairs are being posted on our Facebook page, appearing only in the areas each particular event will take place. Being aware of when one of these job fairs are taking place in your area is critical knowledge. Check it out at www.facebook.com/The.DAV.

If the nation's small businesses would each just hire one veteran, it would cut the unemployment rate in half.
