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December 2011



Welcome to Colorado ESGR. Our purpose is to have an informative newsletter that will educate, inform, and promote service by and to ESGR while fulfilling our mission of supporting Employers, Guard/Reserve members, and COESGR Volunteers.

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U. S. Chamber of Commerce Initiative



National Site News and Information



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The Problem - Veteran Unemployment!

Approximately **160,000** active duty service members and **110,000** National Guardsmen and Reservists transition to civilian life each year. For too long, we've patted our veterans on the back for their service and then pushed them out into the job market alone.

This has led to an unacceptably high unemployment rate among veterans, without regard to their period of service. A recent Department of Labor [report](#) states that in 2010, **the average unemployment rate among returning veterans is 11.5%**. That is **one in ten** of our nation's heroes **who can't find a job** to support their families, doesn't have an income that provides stability, and doesn't have work that provides them with the self-esteem and pride that is so critical to their transition home. Currently, there are nearly **One million unemployed veterans** in the U.S.

- * More than 421,000 Veterans live in Colorado .
- * Nearly 400,000 military members return to the civilian workforce annually.
- * In 2010, there were 11.8 million veterans working or looking for work, accounting for 7.7 percent of the U.S. labor force
- * In Colorado, 11.9 % of Gulf War II era veterans, 18 years and over are unemployed.
- * In general in Colorado, the unemployment rates among Veterans is 8.7% .
- * For Iraq/Afghanistan combat Veterans nationwide, the unemployment rate is about 15.2 %.
- * The national unemployment rate is about 20% among National Guard members.
- * Drawdown in Iraq & Afghanistan will increase the numbers.

Colorado's ESGR Electronic Newsletter is published not only for the information and benefit of the members of the Colorado ESGR but most importantly to our Guard and Reserve members and their employers. The contents of this newsletter highlight activities and events conducted by Colorado ESGR. Send comments regarding this publication to the Newsletter Editor: James Garrett at esgrcolorado@yahoo.com

- ◇ U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service ([VETS](#)), provides resources and expertise to assist and prepare Veterans to obtain meaningful careers, maximize their employment opportunities, and protect their employment rights.
- ◇ In Colorado, the [Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve \(ESGR\)](#), [U. S. Department of Labor, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment](#), [Colorado Army National Guard](#) and numerous non-governmental entities for the first time banded together to host a three day Expo to provide needed and essential assistance to Veterans and Military Personnel seeking employment in Colorado. More than 75 employers with job-openings were there. **A second three-day Expo will be held in Colorado Springs February 29 to March 2, 2012.**
- ◇ The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment participates in the [Transition Assistance Program](#), delivered at bases across the Front Range and designed to prepare service members for the job market as they're discharged.
- ◇ After military discharge, Veterans can find one-on-one help at [Workforce Centers](#) across Colorado.
- ◇ A number of Colorado employers are now looking to hire veterans. Companies like J.P. Morgan Chase, Sears, CenturyLink, USAA, Molson Coors Brewing Company, and many others are taking the lead in working to hire veterans.
- ◇ Working with Chambers of Commerce, the [Society of Human Resource Managers](#), and others, a series of meetings are being planned where employers will be invited to learn first hand about the advantages of hiring veterans, including Guard and Reserve personnel. A hotline is being established where employers wanting to hire veterans can call in and be directed to appropriate sources for reaching those veterans and Guard and Reserve personnel who meet the needs of that specific employer.
- ◇ National Legislation (*discussed next page*) has been signed into law giving employers significant tax credits for hiring veterans.
- ◇ One of the major goals of Colorado Governor, John Hickenlooper, is that Colorado be a place where veterans want to work and live . Getting our veterans back into our workforce is certainly a major step in achieving that goal.

Take the word of these leading national employers:

Odell Riley, Vice President Human Resources and Chief Diversity Officer, CenturyLink.

"CenturyLink takes an aggressive role in recruiting top talent. We are especially proud to recruit employees with the discipline and excellence learned from military service."

Jeff Cathey, head of military banking at Bank of America and a decorated veteran:

"People come out of the armed forces with enormous variety of skills, from leadership training to cyber security to finance. They understand teamwork, And they have an amazing work ethic."

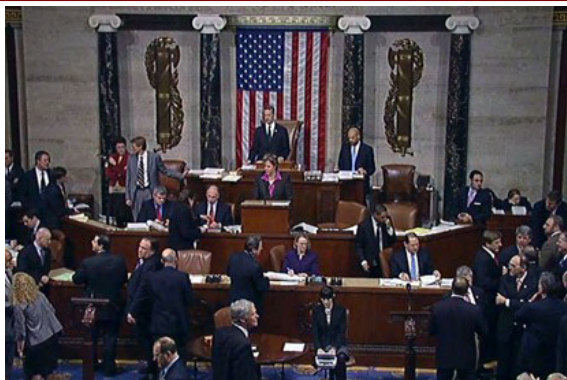
Al Torres, Vice President – Talent Management for Verizon, drives home the point that many in corporate hiring are finding:

"With their mission-driven attitudes, superb training, technical skills and leadership capabilities, our 12,000 veterans play a crucial role in making Verizon the best in the industry."

If you are an employer, large or small, are interested in this effort of getting our veterans back into the workforce, please contact the Colorado ESGR offices at 720-250-1195, 1189 or 1176, and we will make sure we keep you current on how to best reach veterans looking for work and to receive your invitation to attend the planned meetings where you can learn much more about the advantages of hiring veterans.

Veterans have served our country valiantly, they bring valuable experience to the employment table by:

- * Receiving extensive training from the largest educational institution in the world, 73% of that training directly attributable to a civilian job.
- * Having been tested
- * Understanding 24/7
- * Knowing how to report on time
- * Having proven themselves time and again that they know how to accomplish their mission, honorably and often with distinguished valor.



Veterans and transitioning service members looking for civilian jobs got some help from Congress with the passage of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011.

The bill will offer tax credits to businesses that hire veterans – a provision of President Barack Obama’s American Jobs Act.

Surrounded by veterans, service organizations and principal Senate and House sponsors, President Obama signed into law the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 at a White House ceremony on November 21st.

The law will provide firms that hire unemployed veterans with a maximum credit of \$5,600 per veteran. The Wounded Warriors Tax Credit offers firms that hire veterans with service-connected disabilities a maximum credit of \$9,600 per veteran. The law also includes job training benefits for older veterans, and upgraded transition services for men and women leaving active duty, among other initiatives.

The VOW to Hire Heroes Act blends two House and Senate bills proposed earlier in the year. In May, Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), chairwoman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, introduced the Hiring Heroes Act of 2011. In July, Rep. Jeff Miller (R-Fla.), chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, sponsored the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act. It passed the House in October.

Miller praised the bill, but said the federal government must continue to focus on veterans' employment. "We must not lose focus on this issue after this legislation becomes law," he said. "Effective implementation and execution by the (Obama) administration is essential. Today's victory is only the first step. I will continue to champion this issue until we reach the final step when our veterans are out of the unemployment lines and on the path to success."

These are the key provisions of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011:

- **Expanded Education & Training:** The VOW to Hire Heroes Act provides nearly 100,000 unemployed veterans of past eras and wars with up to one year of additional Montgomery GI Bill benefits to qualify for jobs in high-demand sectors, from trucking to technology. It also provides disabled veterans who have exhausted their unemployment benefits up to one year of additional VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits.
- **Mandatory Transition Assistance Program (TAP):** The bill will make TAP mandatory for most service members transitioning to civilian status, upgrade career counseling options and ensure the program is tailored to individuals and the 21st century job market.
- **Head Start on Federal Jobs:** The bill will allow service members to begin the federal employment process by acquiring veteran's preference status prior to separation.
- **Translate Military Skills and Training:** This bill will also require the Department of Labor to take a hard look at how to translate military skills and training to civilian sector jobs, and will work to make it easier to get the licenses and certification our veterans need.

To learn more about the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, click [here](#).

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<http://recruitmilitary.com/>

About RecruitMilitary

RecruitMilitary is the top full-service military-to-civilian recruiting firm in the United States. We use online and offline products to connect employers, franchisors, and educational institutions with men and women who are transitioning from active duty to civilian life, veterans who already have civilian work experience, members of the National Guard and reserve forces, and military spouses. We serve veterans of all ranks, rates, and branches of the armed forces, and our services are free to all men and women who have a military background.



Job Board



Opportunity Expos



Search & Employ

RecruitMilitary is veteran-owned, veteran-operated, and veteran-advised. All of our officers, national account executives, and search consultants are either veterans or active or former reservists. As the nation's leading military-to-civilian recruiting firm, we have established working relationships with industry associations, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

We invest considerable resources to keep our database stocked with fresh candidates. Our candidate-aggregation tactics include the publication of *Search & Employ*, a strong public relations program, web links and partnerships, and keyword purchases on major search engines.

Get Started Today

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- [Active/Former Guard/Reserve](#)
- [Military Veteran/Former Military](#)
- [Military Spouse](#)
- [Employer](#)
- [Franchisor](#)
- [Educational Institution](#)



<http://www.dol.gov/vets/>



View a Hire Veterans [Video](#) from Chase.

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HIRING OUR HEROES

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<http://www.military.com/hiringourheroes/>

HOME PAGE

MILITARY VETERAN
JOB SEEKERS

EMPLOYERS SEEKING
VETERAN TALENT

CAREER FAIRS

Career fairs are great venues for both networking and getting to know the companies or industries you're interested in.

San Diego, CA

Fort Carson - Career Opportunity Day
December 7, 2011
Colorado Springs, CO

Hiring our Heroes - Houston, TX (Minute Maid Park)
December 8, 2011
Houston, TX

Hiring our Heroes - Las Vegas
December 9, 2011
Las Vegas, NV

Fort Belvoir - Career Opportunity Day
December 13, 2011
Springfield, VA

**MILITARY VETERAN
JOB SEEKERS**

EXPLORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES &
GET FREE CAREER ADVICE

[CIVILIAN JOBS & ADVICE](#) >>

**EMPLOYERS SEEKING
VETERAN TALENT**

FIND VETERANS & MILITARY
SPOUSES SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

[HIRE MILITARY TALENT](#) >>



Colorado Senator Bennet launched an enhanced and expanded [Veterans Resources](#) webpage to help connect veterans with education and employment opportunities and local service providers, as well as his office's Veterans Hotline.

The Veterans Resources page provides information and links about educational opportunities through the GI Bill, a searchable job bank, links to new workforce development opportunities and information about where to find Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health and other local services, as well as other resources for veterans and their families. The page also includes

information about my office's Veterans Hotline – 719-328-1100 – which veterans and their families can call to speak with a staff member about making a benefit claim or appeal or about benefits available to veterans.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

GOLD CARD

SERVICES FOR POST 9/11 ERA VETERANS

The One Stop Career Centers are ready to provide you intensive services for up to a six month period through an exciting array of career and supportive services to include:

- Case management
- Skills assessment and interest surveys
- Career guidance
- Job search assistance



HOW TO ACCESS GOLD CARD SERVICES?

- Information about Gold Card Services can be found at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html>
- Locate your nearest One Stop Career Center by going to America's Service Locator www.servicelocator.org or by calling Toll-Free 1-877-US2-JOBS (1-877-872-5627) TTY: 1-877-889-5627.
- Once a One-Stop Career Center has been located, go there and present this Card.
- Information about other services and benefits can be found at www.ebenefits.va.gov and www.nrd.gov.

Eligible Veterans will receive priority of service in all Department of Labor funded employment and training programs



November, 2011



Employers group visits the United States Air Force Academy as part of an employer education event sponsored by Colorado ESGR



From left to right in the picture

are:

Chris Carrington, President and CEO, Alpine Access, **Chris Lewis**, CenturyLink executive, **BGen Chilton**, **Kent Fortune**, head of USAA for Colorado, **David West**, V.P. Semiconductor Marketing, Arrow Electronics, **Steven Cochran**, President, WOW Internet Cable, **Jay Allen**, CEO of CXO, **Karla Tartz**, Deputy Director, Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, **Sam Walker**, Chief Legal Officer, Molson Coors Brewing Company, **Brad Gallup**, President of Cable-Safe.com, as well as head of Colorado Hire Patriots, **Bev Skinner**, Co-Director of our ESGR Employer Outreach Directorate and former banker.



The group was hosted by Brigadier General Catherine Chilton, USAFA). They were provided with a mission brief, presented by two cadets, that covered USAFA history and all aspects of cadet training and academic curriculum. There was a Q & A session with USAFA personnel with many questions asked by the group. Following the briefing, the group then split into separate groups in which each attended one of three classroom sessions, this was followed by a walking tour of the academic facilities. The group attended a lunch then finished with a tour of the Cadet Chapel. Aside from the Chapel tour, this all takes place in areas that are not accessible to the general public.



USERRA Q & A, Part Two

As a continuation to last month's newsletter, here are four more frequently asked questions. You can find the source references to each question in the 20 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1002, at www.ESGR.mil. [Part 1002—Regulations under the Uniformed Services Employment And Reemployment Rights Act Of 1994](#)

1. If I work 3rd shift and get off at 6:00am, can I request to be excused from my Friday night shift so that I can get proper rest and travel to my drill destination.

A. Yes, a service member must have enough time after leaving the employment position to travel safely to the uniformed service site and arrive fit for duty (presumably with enough time to rest in advance of service). (See [1002.74a](#))

2. I missed a promotion examination while away performing military service. My employer states that the exam is only offered once a year and that I will need to wait until next year. Can they do this?

A. No, your employer should give you a reasonable amount of time to adjust to the employment position and then give you a skills test or examination. (See [1002.193b](#))

3. I recently enlisted and my employer is threatening to terminate me, saying that they need someone that is going to be available to work. Can they do this?

A. No, your employer must not deny you employment on the basis of your application for membership in the Uniformed Services (See [1002.18](#))

4. My employer thinks that I am spending too much time away from work and insists that I provide the number to my military chain of command so that they can contact them. Do I have to give them the number?

A. Yes, you should provide them with the number, since your employer is permitted to bring its concerns over the timing, frequency, or duration of the employee's service to the attention of the appropriate military authority. (See [1002.104](#))

If you receive a question and are unsure of the answer, direct the inquirer to the Call Center at 800-336-4590 option 1 or your state Ombudsman Team. Want to learn more? [USERRA 101](#) and [102](#) online trainings are available at www.esgr.mil.

** Clarification for last month's article, question #5: Per the USERRA law, the position you receive upon return from deployment is listed in a specific priority. Your employer can reemploy you into a position in the following priority: the escalator position (a position you would have held with a reasonable certainty had you not been absent for service); your pre-service position; a position comparable to the escalator or pre-service position, or the nearest approximation to one of these positions. (See [1002.197](#))

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 ([USERRA, 38 U.S.C. § 4301 – 4335](#)) is a federal law intended to ensure that persons who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, Reserves, National Guard or other "uniformed services:" (1) are not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their service; (2) are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty; and (3) are not discriminated against in employment based on past, present, or future military service. The federal government is to be a "model employer" under USERRA ([38 U.S.C. § 4301](#)).

1-800-336-4590, opt 1

USERRA@osd.mil

ATTN: Ombudsman
Services

1555 Wilson Blvd
Arlington, VA 22209

EVENTS CALENDAR

DECEMBER

16-18 88th RSC Yellow Ribbon Event

JANUARY 2012

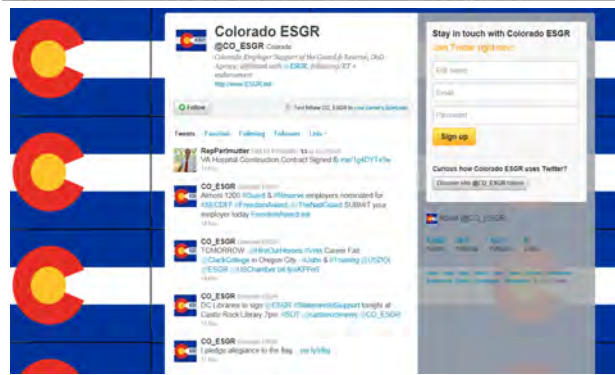
- 16 Freedom Award Nominations Close
- 20 Colorado HR Association Conf.
- 24 Ombudsman Refresher Training
- 27 Student Veterans in Higher Education, Ft Collins, CO

Guardsmen and Reservists, Say Thanks to Your Employer!

Recognize your employer for supporting your military service! Submit a Patriot Award nomination. **Tell us why your employer is great!** When completing the employer recognition form, take a few moments to explain why your employer deserves to be recognized. Colorado ESGR's Awards Team will also review your nomination when they select nominees for higher-level employer support awards.

For more information:
visit [ESGR Patriot Award Nomination](#).

We are on Facebook and Twitter!!



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