

MONTHLY GRANT REPORT

NORTH FLORIDA
JULY 2010

NORTH FLORIDA

New Applicant Totals: 33

31 Spouses

2 Veterans

New Hires: 4

1 Spouse Bay County

2 Spouses Duval County

1 Spouse Okaloosa County

Breakdown:

Baker County (1)

1 Spouse

Bay County (1)

1 Spouse (1 Hire)

Clay County (1)

1 Spouse

Duval County (15)

1 Veteran

14 Spouses (2 Hires)

Escambia County (2)

2 Spouses

Okaloosa (9)

9 Spouses (1 Hire)

Santa Rosa (3)

3 Spouses

St. Johns (1)

1 Veteran

New Volunteers:

Okaloosa County 1 Spouse

NORTHWEST FLORIDA

Summary:

This month MSCCN has seen an increase in the numbers of military spouses reached through direct contact. Contact was made with over 350 military spouses throughout the Panhandle regions in July, although only a small percentage signed on through the gateway. A core focus for August will be to address the issues affecting the number of contacts who sign on and upload resumes into the gateway so that we can increase our applicant base.

July was spent creating new applicant and corporate contacts, planning for job club meetings with Naval Air Station Whiting Field, expanding relationships with each military service center, and improving relationships with our military branch service heads. Contact with employers continues to be a major focus as well as expanding our work from home opportunities and MilSpouse Job Club.

Events and Meetings:

July 14, 2010 Department of Labor VETS Conference

MSCCN Outreach Coordinator Stacy Bayton participated as a panel member at the 2010 Department of Labor Vets Competitive Grantees Training Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia at the Omni located at CNN Center on July 14, 2010.

The title of the panel was "Enhancing the Effectiveness Job Training/Placement & Retention for Female Veterans, Spouses, & Caregivers". The panel was made up of four members from various agencies that currently work with female veterans to include: Peter Wikul from *America Works*; Kenneth Crawford from *Swords to*



Plowshares; Risa Greendlinger from the *National Center on Family Homelessness*; and Stacy Bayton from the *Military Spouse Corporate Career Network*.

The purpose of the panel was to host an interactive work session with grantees who had recently received Department of Labor funds to work with female veterans. Peter Wikul, Kenneth Crawford, and Stacy Bayton are all fellow veterans and experts on working within the veteran communities. This panel discussion explored the questions above and many others from the audience that helped the new grantees identify steps that can be taken to effectively train and place female veterans, spouses, and caregivers in jobs that they can retain, and that provide financial stability, hope and flexibility as they work to improve their health and quality of life.

This opportunity not only allowed us to share techniques and strategies with the attendees, but provided MSCCN with new insights into working with homeless and disabled veterans who are seeking employment.

Many work sessions and discussions at the three-day conference involved how to effectively work with female veterans, incarcerated veterans, and homeless veterans. There is a great deal of concern for veterans from OIF/OEF operations who experience high levels of trauma to include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) that affect their successful reintegration back into society upon their return and separation from the military. Gaps in services for veterans and their families oftentimes lead to difficulties in recovery, reintegration, finding employment, and more which in a number of cases leads to substance abuse, violence, poverty, and/or homelessness.

In summary, this event reinforced what the MSCCN team has found true over time; that there are many issues that need to be addressed in order to assist our veterans and their families, well beyond employment, and this requires the cooperative work of many organizations. By working together and establishing an active network of support, organizations can ensure they offer long-term, sustainable solutions that meet the various needs of veterans and their families.

July 19, 2010 Student Officer Spouse Organization Meeting

On Monday, July 19, 2010, the MSCCN presented services and benefits to members of the Student Officer Spouse Association at NAS Whiting Field. The meeting was held at the Whiting Pines Community Center from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

There were seven members in attendance at this meeting. The presentation included services that MSCCN provides, an overview of how to upload resumes and search jobs on our Kenexa gateway, and one-on-one assistance with each member regarding their individual career objectives and needs.

The Student Officer Spouse Association is made up of spouses who are relatively new to military life, most of whom have a degree and/or career focus, but are unsure of how to proceed with their career while supporting their service member. This opportunity was a clear case of why the MSCCN exists; to

share our resources and benefits of course, but most especially to redirect these spouses back to additional services and benefits that are offered through the Fleet and Family Support Center, and remind them that all of the services and benefits discussed, including those through the MSCCN, were available at any military installation.

July 22, 2010 International Military Spouse Network Meeting

MSCCN was invited to present to the International Military Spouse Network, an organization that helps foreign born military spouses and American military spouses with employment and cultural needs. The monthly meetings are coordinated by the Eglin Airman and Family Readiness Center. This month's meeting was held at the Eglin AFB Education Center from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

There were eleven military spouses in attendance at this meeting. The presentation included services that MSCCN provides an overview of how to upload resumes and search jobs on our Kenexa gateway, and the latest on our gateway expansion that will take place in August. Following this presentation each applicant was allotted time to share their information and experiences with their job search so that they could receive one-on-one assistance on their individual career objectives.

After the meeting, information was exchanged and participants had an opportunity to talk with the organizations privately. Topics addressed with candidates included being proactive in job search, geographic challenges, language barriers, and remaining positive.

Participation in the International Military Spouse Network meetings allows MSCCN team members the opportunity to conduct one on one outreach with military spouses and veterans within Okaloosa County, and share MSCCN services and benefits with individuals who are actively looking for employment. Secondly, but just as important, these meetings provide opportunities to network with affiliate organizations and individuals who also work in support of our military spouses and veterans, providing awareness on new programs or benefits, and expanding opportunities for MSCCN to share their services and benefits with military spouses and veterans from these new networks.

The week following the event was spent conducting follow-up to track the success of participants. All of the participants found the information provided in the workshop helpful and felt optimistic about their employment prospects.

Conclusion:

Priorities this month were meetings and activities that created opportunities for our military spouses and veterans. Whether it was meetings with the military service center team members to discuss new events for military spouses, discussions with employers on new employment opportunities, or presentations before Department of Labor grant recipients on the needs and challenges of those living within the military community, all of July's activities were equally important and advantageous for those

we serve.

Our MSCCN team continued to work together to expand funding opportunities, our work from home program, social media platform, corporate relationships, MilSpouse Job Clubs, virtual trainings and workshops, and relationships with each command and military service center that our programs touch.

NORTHEAST FLORIDA

Summary:

July has been a wonderful month for the grants team in North Florida, and MSCCN has continued our outreach services to military families in the area. We have expanded our virtual training platform and currently have biweekly training sessions available to all of our applicants. This month we featured a webinar to help our applicants organize their job search. We have also expanded the Jacksonville MilSpouse Job Club with the launch of a Meetup webpage and area newsletter. The Meetup page has given us a place to publicize job club events and given spouses a chance to contact each other, while the newsletter gives us a chance to share local resources and job search tips. Our monthly job club meeting was held at the Mayport USO and featured Patty Piazza from Worksource as our guest. We have also been finalizing plans for an all day employment workshop for veterans and spouses that will take place in August.

Virtual Training:

We continue to have great success and interest in our virtual training platform. We currently host a webinar every two weeks and cover various employment topics from networking to attending job fairs and getting organized. These sessions are extremely flexible and allow us to reach a new population of candidates who may not be able to attend on site events. We have also been able to use the sessions to increase awareness of area resources such as Worksource and our Family Service Centers by having their representatives participate as guest speakers. This month we hosted training on job fairs and organizing your job search.

July 15 Virtual Training – How to Make the Most of a Job Fair

This virtual session has been very popular and currently we are scheduling it regularly right before area job fairs. In this session we stressed the importance of networking and discussed the fact that a job fair gives an applicant a great chance to make a connection with recruiters. We recommended that our applicants treat a job fair like a series of mini interviews and prepare themselves thoroughly. We discussed how to dress for an interview, how to prepare a resume, and how to effectively tell a recruiter about yourself. We were also able to spend some time discussing networking and how to present career

accomplishments.

July 27 Virtual Training – Organizing Your Job Search

This virtual training session focused on helping our applicants set goals, create a plan, and make a schedule. We were joined by Patty Piazza, the Military Family Employment Advocate, from Worksource. We discussed the importance of having clear goals when beginning your job search. Many applicants simply want to find a job instead of defining and working toward a particular career goal. By having a clearly defined goal, our applicants were better able to develop their schedules and create job search priorities. We also helped our applicants develop a plan by breaking their job search into key activities with a focus on networking. We followed this up with the importance of keeping a written schedule of tasks and activities and updating it regularly. We listed relevant activities for each of our applicants to add to their schedules and discussed the importance of organization. Patty Piazza also answered our job seeker's questions and shared some of her favorite resources and websites. Finally our applicants had some resume questions so we did a brief resume summary and review.

We also spent time this month notifying our candidates about our Eventbrite webpage. This site is an easy registration page for our events. Candidates can check it regularly for a full list of upcoming events, get event details, and complete their registration. www.msccn.eventbrite.com

Job Club:

July 29 – MilSpouse Job Club Meeting at the Mayport USO

MSCCN hosted a MilSpouse Job Club meeting on July 29, 2010, at the Mayport USO. We met to discuss some of our top tips for making your job search more effective, and Patty Piazza the Military Family Employment Advocate for Worksource was our guest speaker.

The meeting started with introductions from the group and we asked them what top job search questions they would like answered. Their top questions were all about resumes so we decided to change our agenda and address the resume questions. In our experience, the resume process seems to be the most confusing to our applicants. We spent some time explaining that they will hear many different opinions about resumes, but that our best advice is to try to think like the hiring manager and give them a resume that shows a clear benefit to the company. We also discussed the need to target your resume every time you apply for a job and to make sure that you apply only to positions for which you are fully qualified.

We then discussed some of the most important ways to make the job search process more effective starting with organization. We emphasized that being organized can not only help to keep track of job applications and contacts but it will also make you feel more confident. We suggested networking and volunteer opportunities that would work for each applicant and how to fit these events into a busy

schedule. We also discussed interviewing and worked on some practice questions. Each applicant got the chance to develop and practice their answer to what is their greatest weakness. Finally they had additional questions about job fairs, dressing for interviews, and job boards. We took time to answer their questions and shared a list of upcoming workshops, job fairs, and internet resources.

Part of our job club expansion this month was the creation of the MilSpouse Job Club Meetup page. www.meetup.com/milspousejax/ The Meetup page let us feature information about upcoming meetings and includes a discussion board for members to share resources and ideas. We also created a local MilSpouse newsletter. This month's issue featured an article on our local Fleet and Family Support Centers and information about the Florida BrAlve hotline for military families.

Conclusion:

This has been a great month for North Florida. Our expanded virtual training sessions have been very successful, and our applicants were pleased to be able to get some individual help and advice. This was the first virtual training where we brought in one of our partner organizations and the format was very effective. We were able to share more resources with our applicants and our virtual platform offers our partners a new way to promote their services. The MSCCN MilSpouse Job Club meeting was also a great success and seems to be filling a need for a flexible, informal environment where spouses can ask their pressing questions and get individual advice. The meetings are still small but we should be able to grow our numbers through word of mouth and advertising. Our Meetup page has been successful so far and we are working on another newsletter with information about next month's job club meeting. We are also in the process of organizing an all day employment workshop for August that will feature a resume workshop, keynote speaker, lunch, and a computer class.

JULY 2010

Location	Veterans		Spouses		Active / Transitioning		Dependent		
	County	Applicants	Hires	Applicants	Hires	Applicants	Hires	Applicants	Hires
Baker				1					
Bay				1	1				
Clay				1					
Duval		1		14	2				
Escambia				2					
Okaloosa				9	1				
Santa Rosa				3					
St. Johns		1							
Total		2		31	4				