



From Deployment to Employment

Goodwill's Call to Action on Supporting Military Service Members, Veterans and Their Families

As the United States prepares to withdraw from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the need for a continuum of coordinated services for military service members, veterans and their families is at an all-time high.

In 2010, more than 20 million men and women in the United States over the age of 18 were veterans. This population is particularly vulnerable to a variety of challenges that keep them from fully participating in the civilian workforce and providing for themselves and their families.

These challenges include physical disabilities such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), psychological disabilities such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, homelessness, long waits for benefits and other supports, lack of access to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities and declining federal dollars set aside for those supports.

Military spouses and families face challenges of their own. Managing the household and caring for their children alone are major stressors for spouses. Because military families tend to move more frequently than non-military families, they may find it difficult to pursue long-term employment and career-advancing opportunities.

A stubbornly bleak job market translates to high unemployment for veterans — especially those ages 18–24, who face an unemployment rate of 20.9 percent, which is more than twice the national average. Studies show that recently separated service members have more difficulty finding their first civilian jobs within the first two years after separation when compared to their peers with the same educational attainment and demographic characteristics. They are also more likely to earn lower wages, especially among those who are college educated.

Mechanisms are needed to translate skills obtained during military service into certification and/or college credit to make veterans more job-ready.

For veterans with disabilities, the job outlook is even worse. Despite advances made since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA), employment of people with significant disabilities has declined over the past decade. In April 2011, this population's unemployment rate was 15.6 percent, compared with 8.9 percent for those without disabilities.

While a variety of supports are already available, there is still a clear need for agencies to improve and increase services to this unique population.

In its newest white paper — *From Deployment to Employment: Goodwill's Call to Action on Supporting Military Service Members, Veterans and Their Families* — Goodwill® calls upon all stakeholders (including Goodwill member organizations) to ensure that the support system for military service members, veterans and their families 1) is easy to understand and navigate, 2) coordinates services and information among federal agencies, and 3) promotes local stakeholder collaboration.

Turn to Goodwill as a Resource

As a service provider known for its work with these populations, Goodwill seeks to support your work by investing resources to help military service members, veterans and families to find jobs and advance in careers.

Goodwill has been a long-time advocate for and provider of services to veterans. In 2010, Goodwill provided job training, employment services and other supports to more than 2.4 million people, including 25,766 veterans. Of that number, 4,449 had documented disabilities (1,363 of which were service connected).

Because Goodwill is a business enterprise, the organization is often able to employ many of the people who are seeking services. In fact, of the 98,000 people employed at Goodwill in 2010, more than 23,000 were people who came to Goodwill for help and were placed in a job within the organization. An additional 140,669 individuals were placed in jobs in their communities.

Goodwill has made a national commitment to provide face-to-face career and family

strengthening services to more than 15,000 military spouses, veterans and their families this year. In addition, it will expand virtual career services — linked to military websites — to tens of thousands more people.

While some of the challenges faced by veterans are unique to their experiences, many disadvantaging conditions — from homelessness and poverty to severe physical disabilities — are obstacles that Goodwill has helped millions overcome for more than a century.

Goodwill's 158 member agencies stand ready to partner with your organization to help provide support services and other assistance to veterans, service members and their families. Contact your local Goodwill to find out ways to help in your local community.

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Goodwill in Action

Goodwill Southern California (Los Angeles) has implemented a pilot program to address the job training needs of the veteran community in Los Angeles County. Five veterans with service-connected disabilities run the program. They represent all branches of service. The objective of the 15-month pilot program is to enroll 140 veterans and place 83 veterans in unsubsidized employment by June 30, 2012. Additionally, more than 5,000 veterans will be served through self-directed programs.

Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries (Cincinnati, OH) has administered the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project (HVRP) since 1998. Through an HVRP grant, the agency has provided job training and housing assistance to veterans who are homeless. Since January 2008, the program has served 861 veterans and has a 90 percent job placement rate.

Goodwill Industries of the Silicon Valley (San Jose, CA) has received an HVRP grant to serve veterans who are homeless. Two case managers, an instructor, a peer mentor and the program manager on staff address veterans' needs. A clinical psychologist supervises seven interns to provide assessment and counseling. Approximately 25 percent of placements are within Goodwill in transitional employment/on-the-job training, where they can remain for up to six months. One project has veterans deconstructing mattresses, the components of which are sold to recyclers. Those revenues are reinvested to support the program. In 2010, the agency served 270 veterans, a significant increase over the 61 served in 2007.

Goodwill Industries of Houston (TX) operates five employment programs for veterans: the HVRP, the Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program, the Female Homeless Veterans and Homeless Veterans with Families Program, the Veterans Workforce Investment Program, and the Gulf War Veterans Employment and Training Services. In 2010, Houston served 1,105 veterans.

MY STORY: Ashley Call

I joined the Army National Guard in June 2006 while attending high school. After graduation, I worked various low-paying jobs until I was called to active duty. I was deployed to Iraq from 2009 to 2010, working as an emergency medic at a camp 20 miles south of Baghdad.

After completing my tour of duty, I returned to Virginia, where I began looking for suitable employment while maintaining my status in the Army National Guard. Unable to find employment, I signed up for unemployment with the VA Employment Commission. I found myself in a position of being a live-in housekeeper. It was not a good living arrangement.

Even though I had experience as an emergency medic, no one would offer me employment because I didn't have a civilian certificate.

During a visit to the VA Employment Commission, I discussed my situation with my counselor. She informed me about the dislocated workers program, operated by Goodwill Industries of the Valleys (Roanoke, VA).



I enrolled in medical assisting training that taught me to work in a doctors' office, provide assistance during patient examinations, keep patient and related electronic health records information, and perform clinical, administrative and laboratory duties.

The opportunity provided to me by Goodwill will enable me to work in a field I find exciting and rewarding.

About Goodwill

Goodwill generates opportunities for people to achieve economic stability and build strong families and vibrant communities by offering job training, employment placement services and other community-based programs for people who have disabilities, lack education or job experience, or face other employment challenges. In 2010, approximately 170,000 people obtained meaningful employment as a result of Goodwill career services programs. Collectively, these employees earned \$2.7 billion in salaries and wages and contributed to their communities as productive, tax-paying citizens.

For more information or to receive a full copy of the white paper, contact Goodwill Industries International.

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