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**New ‘Mission Wisconsin’ initiative provides state employers with unique opportunity to recruit military veterans**

*Initiative will help Wisconsin companies fill workforce needs by engaging with service members about to return to civilian life*

**November 29, 2018** — State officials are unveiling a new initiative to help Wisconsin companies recruit workers by enabling them to engage with military personnel around the country before they return to civilian life.

The “Mission Wisconsin Talent Pipeline” is the next phase of the state’s \$1.9 million national marketing campaign to encourage transitioning military personnel and their spouses to live and work in Wisconsin once they leave the service. The campaign is a joint effort of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

A key component of the campaign involves having a team of state employees and private-sector representatives visit Hiring our Heroes transition summits at military bases throughout the country and at select installations abroad to tout the attributes of Wisconsin. The delegation has visited bases in three states so far and personally interacted with more than 850 service members.

Each business that registers with the new “Mission Wisconsin Talent Pipeline” initiative will be asked to provide information on its open positions and what skill sets the company is seeking. After each transition summit, the Wisconsin delegation will provide that company with access to vetted résumés for transitioning veterans and their spouses who may be a good match for those openings.

In addition, “Mission Wisconsin” companies will be invited to join the Wisconsin delegation at the Hiring our Heroes transition summits and host an employer table without having to pay the fees typically associated with hiring fairs. When possible, Wisconsin businesses will have their tables placed near the state’s booth, which highlights the many benefits of living and working in Wisconsin. Employers also have the option of hosting their own “sidecar” events in conjunction with transition summits to further engage with base personnel.

Businesses that may not have the capability to host their own employer display or table at the summits can opt to have a representative help staff the state's booth as a "Wisconsin ambassador." Ambassadors will be part of the Wisconsin delegation and will help promote the state's exceptional educational, professional and personal fulfillment opportunities to transitioning service members and their spouses.

Companies also will have the opportunity to apply for a corporate fellowship program coordinated by the national Hiring our Heroes program. If accepted, the company would host a 12-week program to provide transitioning service members with professional training and hands-on experience in the civilian workforce. The program helps prepare candidates for a smooth transition into meaningful civilian careers and enables participating businesses to develop a more comprehensive understanding of veterans' needs, skills and considerations.

"In the three months since we launched our campaign to attract transitioning veterans, we have not only talked to hundreds of military personnel interested in learning more about Wisconsin, but we have heard from many state employers who want to be part of this effort," said Tricia Braun, deputy secretary and chief operating officer of WEDC. "Mission Wisconsin' will provide state companies interested in hiring veterans with a unique way to connect to these talented individuals."

"Whether a company desires to hire one, 10, 100 or 1,000 veterans, I encourage interested companies to partner with us," said DVA Secretary Daniel Zimmerman. "Not only does such a partnership bring quality employees to local businesses, but it also brings prospective members to local veterans and community service organizations. Hiring veterans is a winning proposition for all involved."

Braun announced the new initiative Wednesday at the Future Wisconsin Summit in Madison, sponsored by the WMC Foundation.

More than 40 Wisconsin companies, including Foxconn, Oshkosh Defense, WPS Health Solutions, Quad Graphics and American Family Insurance, have already started the process to become part of the program.

"WPS Health Solutions is a 'veteran-ready' employer that goes to great lengths to support our military personnel and veterans," said Timothy La Sage, WPS military affairs manager. "The skills these men and women acquire in the military can help businesses in Wisconsin to flourish, and every employer should appreciate a veteran's ability to work in diverse groups and environments. 'Mission Wisconsin' is a proactive way to recruit transitioning veterans who will benefit our great state."

Companies interested in learning more about the "Mission Wisconsin Talent Pipeline" program can visit [wedc.org/hire-veterans](http://wedc.org/hire-veterans). Businesses can complete a form to ensure they are included on the list of Wisconsin companies actively seeking to hire veterans, and will be contacted by someone from the initiative with more information.

Wisconsin's effort to attract transitioning military personnel is part of the state's new \$6.8 million marketing campaign aimed at attracting talent to address Wisconsin's current and future workforce needs. This marks the first time the state has launched a comprehensive talent attraction campaign aimed at military personnel and spouses.

As part of the campaign, the Wisconsin delegation plans to attend transition summits and related events at more than a dozen military installations throughout the U.S. and overseas. The summits are two-day events that help transitioning service members and their spouses prepare for civilian careers. At the summits, Wisconsin has an exhibit and other interactive opportunities, and members of the delegation engage one-on-one with the service members to talk about all the state has to offer. As a result of those face-to-face meetings, there are now more than 400 active cases in which DVA and DWD are working with service members to help them find jobs and learn more about Wisconsin.

Wisconsin is the first and only state to nationally and internationally engage with Hiring our Heroes, part of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. The Wisconsin delegation has visited bases in California, Hawaii and Washington. Other bases that will be visited over the next year are in Missouri, Texas, Georgia, Germany and Japan.

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# MISSION WISCONSIN: IT'S MORE YOU

In 2018, the state of Wisconsin launched an integrated talent attraction marketing campaign designed to showcase all Wisconsin has to offer for U.S. service members and their families as they transition to civilian life. As we travel to various U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring our Heroes transition summits throughout the country and abroad to promote the career and lifestyle opportunities available in Wisconsin, we are inviting Wisconsin companies to join the effort to connect these talented individuals with the resources our state offers for personal and professional success.

## Reaching talent one-on-one

If you are a Wisconsin-based business or organization looking to engage with service members and their families as part of your talent engagement strategies, we encourage you to consider participating at one of the upcoming Hiring our Heroes transition summits. There are several possible ways to get involved. At each level, WEDC, the Department of Workforce Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs are here to help your company connect with veterans who possess the skills your business needs to fill open positions.

- 1) Talent pipeline:** After submitting an interest form, you will be contacted to gather information on what open positions your company has and what skill sets you're seeking. Then, after each Hiring our Heroes event, the Wisconsin delegation will provide you with vetted résumés for transitioning veterans and their spouses who may meet your requirements and are likely to be interested in the opportunities you have to offer.
- 2) Gratis employer booth:** Register through the Hiring our Heroes site to host an employer booth at an upcoming transition summit: [www.hiringourheroes.org](http://www.hiringourheroes.org). When possible, Wisconsin-based businesses will have their booths placed near the state's booth, which highlights the many benefits of living and working in Wisconsin. There are no booth fees at these events, unlike many other hiring fairs. Companies are responsible for their own logistics for events they attend.
- 3) Wisconsin ambassador:** If your business is not able to host your own employer table, your representative may join state agency staff in the Wisconsin booth to serve as a representative of and advocate for Wisconsin's exceptional educational, professional and personal fulfillment opportunities.
- 4) Corporate fellowship:** Receive information about applying to this program coordinated by the Hiring our Heroes program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. If accepted, your company would host a 12-week program to provide transitioning service members and military spouses with professional training and hands-on experience in the civilian workforce. Your company would be helping to prepare candidates for a smooth transition into meaningful civilian careers and would benefit from the chance to develop a more comprehensive understanding of veterans' needs, skills and considerations.

For more information visit [wedc.org/hire-veterans](http://wedc.org/hire-veterans)

By visiting this page, you will be able to fill out a form to be included on the list of Wisconsin companies actively seeking to hire veterans, and will be contacted by someone from the initiative to follow up.



# Wisconsin-themed special events

In addition to the formal summits, we are looking to host additional engagement opportunities when possible. Known as side-car events, they will be opportunities for businesses attending the transition summits to provide their recruiter with additional touch-points in a more informal setting that will allow attendees to experience Wisconsin hospitality. These events will pull together all three planks of the **Think-Make-Happen In Wisconsin®** effort: transitioning service members, alumni and millennials.

These events are a cooperative effort to promote Wisconsin, with a broader goal of demonstrating that in Wisconsin we work together and support one another. With the participation of a variety of companies, we can better demonstrate Wisconsin's supportive, community-oriented culture and showcase how Wisconsin workers can be engaged with a number of different entities while pursuing the things that matter most to them. These events also represent an opportunity for Wisconsin companies to make meaningful connections with prospective employees who possess valuable skills and attributes. We hope you'll join us and help tell the story of why in Wisconsin, you can be **More You**.

If your company or organization is interested in joining in these engagement opportunities, please visit [wedc.org/hire-veterans](http://wedc.org/hire-veterans)



## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TRANSITIONING VETERANS EVENT DATES AND LOCATIONS

Aug 29-30 .....	Camp Pendleton, CA	Feb. 27-28 .....	Yokosuka, Japan
Sept. 24-26 .....	Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington	April 1-2.....	Bavaria, Germany
Sept. 27.....	Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington	April 3-4.....	Kaiserslautern, Germany
Oct. 15-17 .....	Schofield Barracks (Army), Hawaii	May 8-9 .....	Fort Leonard Wood (Army), Missouri
Oct. 18.....	Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii	May 15-16 .....	Fort Bliss (Army), Texas
Oct. 19.....	Marine Corps Base, Hawaii	June 19-20.....	Fort Gordon (Army), Georgia
Feb. 25-26.....	Okinawa, Japan	TBD .....	Camp Lejeune Marine Corps Base, North Carolina