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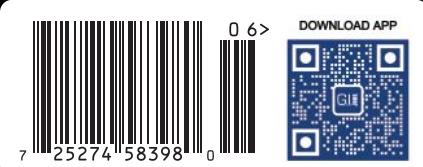
YOUR GUIDE TO CIVILIAN SUCCESS®



Summer Edition

MILITARY FRIENDLY® EMPLOYERS

2024



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JUNE 2024



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MILITARY FRIENDLY® EMPLOYERS 2.0



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THE OSCARS HAVE NOTHING ON THESE AWARDS

I'VE NEVER BEEN A BIG FAN OF AWARDS.

I have only the slightest interest in the Oscars or Grammys, preferring instead more practical awards like JD Power that help you make big-ticket purchases. So the irony wasn't lost on me when I was recently given the title of awards program manager.

This issue includes one of those practical awards. First published in 2003, the Military Friendly[®] Employers program identifies organizations that devote significant resources to helping America's veterans succeed as civilians. There are 40 new Military Friendly[®] Employers listed in this issue— invaluable intel for transitioning service members, veterans and their families.

There are also two individual awards in this issue that I find more inspiring than either the

Oscars or Grammys (sorry Swifties). The 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards (EVLAs) celebrate military veterans who are thriving as civilian employees. They reinforce our belief that most veterans are better for their service and excel as employees, volunteers and community leaders when given the opportunity.

The 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America awards recognize individuals—both veterans and non-veterans—who advocate for veterans in the civilian workplace. These individuals work tirelessly, and often quietly, to help our nations' veterans thrive in their civilian careers. Their work is humbling and inspiring.

Move over, Oscars. Let's celebrate the real heroes. ☺



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Want to know what Military Friendly® is all about?

Find the methodology and more at

MilitaryFriendly.org/mfe/methodology

MILITARY FRIENDLY® EMPLOYERS 2.0

THE SUMMER EDITION OF THE MILITARY FRIENDLY® EMPLOYERS GUIDE ADDS 40 MORE ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE VIGOROUSLY RECRUITING VETERANS.

**WITH SUMMER COMES BACKYARD
BBQS, FAMILIES VACATIONS, FOURTH
OF JULY AND OUTDOOR RECREATION.**

Summertime also means more Military Friendly® Employers.

Yep, since the 2024 list was published in the December issue of *G.I. Jobs*, Military Friendly® added 40 more organizations to the 2024 cohort. They were too late to get into the December issue, but these organizations demonstrated success in recruiting, hiring, onboarding and advancing the careers of transitioning service members, veterans and their families.

You can view the full list on MilitaryFriendly.org, and the additional organizations on the next page. The Military Friendly® Employers list is a great place to start researching your post-military career because these organizations go above and beyond in helping America's veterans succeed.



AWARDS PROGRAM: RISING TO THE TOP

The Military Friendly® assessment results determine not only if an institution is Military Friendly®, but how Military Friendly® it is. The awards program provides a more competitive view of how an organization is performing compared to similar organizations. Military Friendly® awarded employers that rise above the Military Friendly® designation in the five revenue categories.

AN EMPLOYER CAN BE AWARDED:

TOP 10 – The best of the best!

GOLD – Within 10% of the 10th-ranked organization.

SILVER – Within 20% of the 10th-ranked organization.

BRONZE – Within 30% of the 10th-ranked organization.

DESIGNATED – These organizations are deemed Military Friendly®.

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Amazon
CBRE Group Inc.
JCPenney
KBR Inc.
McLane Company Inc.
Metlife Inc.
NetApp
Oshkosh Corporation
Schneider
Total Quality Logistics

AWARD

Bronze
Silver
Bronze
Bronze
Bronze
Bronze
Silver
Silver
Gold
Bronze
Silver

\$1 BILLION TO \$5 BILLION

EMPLOYER

ATI
Colas USA
Michaels Stores Inc.
Milliman Inc.
Novolex
Parsons Corporation
Sitel Group
Veterans United Home Loans

AWARD

Silver
Gold
Bronze
Bronze
Bronze
Gold
Bronze
Bronze

\$500 MILLION TO \$1 BILLION

EMPLOYER

Leaf Home
The Guthrie Clinic
TMC Transportation

AWARD

Bronze
Bronze
Silver

LESS THAN \$500 MILLION

EMPLOYER

7G Environmental Compliance Management
Academy of World Education
AgileDad
Boldly
Capgemini US
Capital Premier Construction
Direct Email Marketing
Excentium Inc.
Jason's Computer Services
POSDATA Group Inc.
Quiet Professionals
Shoppa's Material Handling
Technergetics
UVision USA
Wild Monkey

AWARD

Bronze
Gold
Bronze
Bronze

GOVERNMENT/NONPROFIT

EMPLOYER

City of Largo
Clemson University
Golden State Water

AWARD

Bronze
Bronze
Gold



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HOW MILITARY FRIENDLY® IS DETERMINED

THE LIST OF MILITARY FRIENDLY® EMPLOYERS and Military Friendly® Employer ratings are assessed through the evaluation of both public data about the organization and proprietary data gathered through the free Military Friendly® Employers survey, which is a part of the Military Friendly® Companies survey. The annual, data-driven Military Friendly® Employers survey assessment is available at no cost to thousands of organizations nationwide; employers must have hired military veterans within the last 12 months in order to participate.

Each year, employers taking the survey are held to a higher standard via improved methodology, criteria and weightings developed with the assistance of an independent research firm and an advisory council.

Survey responses are weighted according to the categories below. Final survey results and ratings are determined by combining an employer's survey scores with the assessment of the organization's ability to meet minimum thresholds for the recruiting, hiring, advancement and retention of veterans and military employees. The benchmark is set by the leading organization.

CURRENT CRITERIA

Organizations must successfully complete the Military Friendly® Employers portion of the Military Friendly® Companies survey to verify that they meet at least three of the following benchmarks:

1. New Hire Retention Rate for Veterans is greater than 50%.
2. New Hire Retention for Veterans is higher than for Non-Military Employees.
3. New Hire Retention Rate for Guard & Reserve Employees is greater than 50%.
4. Military Employee Turnover is lower than for Non-Military Employees.
5. Military Employee Turnover is less than 20%.
6. Promotions and Advancements of Military Employees is higher than for Non-Military Employees.
7. Percent of Military Applicants selected is higher than for Non-Military Applicants selected.
8. Guard and Reserve policies exceed federal requirements.

Additionally, Military Friendly® uses public data sources to check if the company was found in violation of the following veteran protections within the past 12 months:

- Company has an outstanding claim(s) case or violation under investigation by the US Departments of Labor or Defense, or the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.
- Company has been debarred from participation in federal contracting.

Advertising in G.I. Jobs, or purchasing services, is not considered when scoring surveys or earning the Military Friendly® designation. Only employers that have successfully met the minimum thresholds and standards, have completed and submitted the current year's survey, and have been scored as being Military Friendly® can use the designation title. Employers that receive the Military Friendly® designation are provided a free profile in the December issue of G.I. Jobs and on [MilitaryFriendly.org](#) to make it easy for the audience to learn more about the organization.

It is important to note that the Military Friendly® scoring is fully automated.

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Nominations for the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards are open to the general public and were reviewed by a selection committee comprising prior award winners, members of the G.I. Jobs Editorial Advisory Council and G.I. Jobs editorial staff.

Recognizing Excellence: Meet the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Award Winners

By Dan Fazio

If you wore the uniform, you probably agree that military service was not easy. Yet most service members take with them valuable knowledge, habits and skills that serve them well the rest of their lives. Many apply both hard and intangible skills to their civilian careers.

We'd like you to meet 40 remarkable individuals whose application of their military training and experience to their jobs got them noticed. In fact, they were nominated and selected for Military Friendly®'s 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards (EVLA), which celebrate US military and veterans making a positive impact on their organizations and peers.

"Serving in the military was remarkable, tiring, difficult, and truly the most humbling experience of my life," said Marc Migala, an EVLA recipient who retired from the Army and today serves as the director of Veterans Health Care Services for UPMC. "Continuing to serve after retirement through advancing care delivery specific to veterans across an entire health delivery system has been some of the most rewarding experiences of my career."

This year's EVLA honorees were chosen by a selection committee comprising veterans from the 2023 cohort along with editorial advisors and staff. We asked the 2024 cohort what this award means to them.

**Amy Bleken | CEO | Client Solution Architects | Army, 1993–2000 | Sergeant (E-5)**

"The opportunity to be CEO of Client Solution Architects (CSA) is just one example of how veteran experience translates to a corporate career. As a female, former enlisted Army veteran, the leadership acumen I use daily to lead and inspire CSA stems from the time I spent in uniform serving a larger cause. I hope this recognition resonates with other women veterans who aspire to see their experience valued in a business environment and beyond."

**Jeff Boudreau | Community Banking Market Manager | Old National Bank | Marine Corps, 1985–1993 | Sergeant (E-5)**

"Receiving the Employee Veteran Leadership Award from Military Friendly® means a great deal to me personally. To have a national leader in veterans advocacy recognize my work with veterans is an affirmation that the work I have been doing is in line with the highest standards of veteran's advocates. My hope is that this recognition in G.I. Jobs magazine will encourage veterans to consider bank leadership at Old National Bank as a career."

**Jeff Buchanan | Maintenance Lead | Worthington Enterprises | Navy, 1993–1998 | Petty Officer Third Class (E-4)**

"I am deeply honored and grateful to receive this award. It serves as a validation of the dedication and passion I have for supporting my fellow veterans in their journey beyond and after their military service. This award symbolizes the importance of the work we do in providing resources and assistance to ensure their successful transition into civilian life. I am truly happy to be recognized for these efforts, but more importantly, I am thankful for the opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of those who have served our country. This award strengthens my resolve to continue advocating for and supporting our veterans, and I am humbled to be part of such a noble cause."

**Riley Burdick | Supervisor, Operations & Maintenance - T&D | Arizona Public Service (APS)****Army National Guard, 2005–Present | Chief Warrant Officer 3 (W-3)**

"This award symbolizes a commitment to honoring the sacrifice and service of veterans. It signifies recognition for their invaluable contributions and the importance of integrating them into the workforce. By supporting hiring initiatives for veterans, we not only honor their service but also tap into a pool of disciplined, skilled, and dedicated individuals who enrich our workplaces with their unique perspectives and experiences. It's a testament to our collective duty to support those who have served our country selflessly."

**Brad Burleson | Director of Safety and Security | Stephenville Independent School District****National Guard, 2003–Present | First Sergeant (E-8)**

"It is an honor to be selected for the Employee Veteran Leadership Award. I am proud to serve my community, state, and nation through my leadership in the military and in education. I am blessed to have supportive friends, family, and co-workers who make it all possible."

**Elizabeth Chandler | Assistant Director, Military Education Benefits | Southern New Hampshire University****Army, 2005–2014 | Captain (O-3)**

"Receiving this leadership award is a profound honor, resonating with the values instilled by military service. I am deeply humbled by the acknowledgement of my efforts to inspire, empower, and uplift others. I firmly believe in fostering an environment founded on trust, accountability, and respect, enabling everyone to excel and thrive. Serving the military community is a privilege, and I'm dedicated to maintaining high standards and serving as a catalyst for positive change."

**Daniel Clabbers | Lean Operations Leader | GE Aerospace | Navy, 1992–2022 | Commander (O-5)**

"This recognition is a testament to the entire GE Aerospace Veterans Network. So many veterans and advocates who care for the well-being of not only those who served, but their families, and their local communities as well. To all veterans who continue to serve outside of uniform, our GE Aerospace Veterans Network will always recognize and support those men and women who unselfishly volunteered themselves to accomplish missions around the world."

**Carlos Couto | Director of Strategic Partnerships | Comcast | Army, 2000–2011 | Captain (O-3)**

"I'm grateful for this award because it recognizes veterans for what they do beyond their military service. Our sense of mission and purpose rarely ends with our enlistment—and being recognized in this way shows that veterans are visible and valued for more than our past accomplishments. It acknowledges that ours is a lifelong commitment to our country and communities."

**Jennifer Cragg | Deputy Public Affairs | US Navy | Navy, 1989–1994, 1994–1998 (Reserve), 2002–2021 | Commander (O-5)**

"I am honored to be included in the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards list, which is presented by Military Friendly®. The awardees featured in the list serve as an example of how veterans continue to find ways to give back and serve in their communities."

**Michael Edbauer | President | Highmark Western and Northeastern New York | Army Reserve, 1985–1995 | Captain (O-3)**

"I am honored and humbled to receive the Employee Veteran Leadership Award. This award recognizes not only the advantages that military experience provides but also the valuable contributions veterans make in the workplace and our communities. I've benefited from other veterans who mentored me and paved the way for myself and others. I hope this award is a symbol of encouragement to those transitioning from military to civilian roles now and in the future."

**Jack Fitzgerald | Renewals & Customer Success Manager | RingCentral | Air Force, 2014–2023 | Captain (O-3)**

"It is an honor to be recognized for this award! I am appreciative of the opportunity RingCentral has provided me, starting with my Skillbridge internship and continuing on as a full-time employee. I'd like to thank my DEI Program Coordinator, Tasia, and my manager, Nick, for submitting me for this award. Lastly, I'd like to thank my wife, Katie, for her continued support as we've transitioned from the military to the civilian workforce."

**Jacqueline Foster | Site IT Adoption and Training Specialist | Roche | Army, 1999–2002 | Specialist (E-4)**

"I am deeply honored to have been selected for the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards. This acknowledgment reflects my commitment as the co-lead of Roche's Veterans BRG for cultivating a supportive atmosphere for veterans transitioning into the civilian workforce. It also symbolizes my embodiment of military principles such as leadership, teamwork, and determination in all professional pursuits. I am deeply grateful for this recognition and will continue striving to make a positive impact at work and in the community."



Patricia Frost | Senior Vice President and Chief People and Places Officer | Seagate Technology
Army, 1986–2018 | Major General (O-8)

"I am honored to receive the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Award. This recognition symbolizes the values, honor, integrity, and dedication that I strive to uphold in the military community and my professional life. I am grateful for the support of my team, family, and the opportunities Seagate Technology has provided. This award motivates me to continue to foster a culture of inclusion, ensuring every member feels valued and empowered."



Timothy Gahr | General Manager | PRIDE Industries | Army, 1984–2005 | Chief Warrant Officer 2 (W-2)

"I am so honored to have been nominated and selected for the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Award. It was an honor to serve in the Army for 20 years and is a further honor to be in a position and the ability to give back to our veterans and our active-duty service members daily. I look forward to the many more years ahead where I can continue to do this."



George Garcia | Project Manager II | HCA Healthcare | Army, 2001–2022 | Sergeant First Class (E-7)

"Receiving this award is a true honor and I am grateful for the nomination by esteemed colleagues. Transitioning from active duty to civilian life was daunting, but HCA and our Veteran Colleague Network provided invaluable support. HCA's mission of 'Above all else, we are committed to the care and improvement of human life' resonated deeply with my military values. I've dedicated myself to not only HCA but also assisting fellow veterans in joining our community."



Jesus Garcia | Store Manager | Lowe's Companies Inc. | Army, 1994–2002 | Staff Sergeant (E-6)

"My time spent serving in the Army taught me invaluable leadership lessons that I still stand by today. Leadership principles like leading by example, clear communication, teamwork, adaptability, and accountability shaped me into who I am, how I receive leadership, and how I lead today. It is a lifelong badge of honor to have served in the military, and it is an honor now to receive this award. I have had so many leaders dedicate their time to see me grow, and I do all I can to pay it forward in my leadership positions today."



Brian Geer | President & COO | The Mannik & Smith Group Inc. | Navy Reserve, 2009–Present | Lieutenant Commander (O-4)

"I am honored to be considered for the EVLA. Balancing both a civilian and military career is not possible without the support of my family and employer, The Mannik & Smith Group Inc. Their commitment to me is humbling. Military leaders are very supportive of our service members' career progression, and I strive to bring that 'people first' mindset to my civilian employees by mentoring team members to advance their career growth."



Kyle Giffen | Practice Manager II | FIS | Navy, 2007–Present | Lieutenant Commander (O-4)

"I am honored to have been selected as a recipient for the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards. As a veteran and current reservist, I recognize the hurdles many veterans face while transitioning and the challenges of part-time service. Any contributions I have made would not have been possible without FIS' commitment and dedication to its veteran population. I remain devoted to our veterans and the value they bring to any organization."



Terence Gragston | Area Manager | Amazon | Army, 2006–2017 | Staff Sergeant (E-6)

"I am honored to receive the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Award. Veterans are important in the workforce. I'm happy to be a leader in my civilian career for Amazon. I look forward to continuing to uplift the Cincinnati area in my professional and personal endeavors."



Nicholas Gross | Senior Vice President, Integrated Solutions | AAR Corp. | Air Force, 1996–2000 | Senior Airman (E-4)

"I am humbled and grateful to be recognized on Military Friendly®'s 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards list. My military service shaped who I am today, and I make it my mission to pay it forward by creating meaningful leadership opportunities for other veterans in the workplace. In my role with AAR, I feel privileged to continue serving the warfighter—even out of uniform."



Richard Jaynes | AcqCentric | KSA Software and Integration | Army, 1990–2011 | Lieutenant Colonel (O-5)

"Be a servant leader. Lead your personnel in a fair and positive manner, provide them the necessary resources, give credit when warranted, and support their individual growth. Your team will accomplish miracles for your organization"



Augie Keene | Implementation Consultant | ADP | Navy, 2013–2023 | Petty Officer First Class (E-6)

"I must say this is super surprising and I have been caught off guard with this. I am grateful that someone is watching and finds what I do worthy enough to select me for this prestigious award. I just truly love what I do. It gives me joy to see anyone succeed, especially fellow veterans. I understand the difficulties with getting out of the military and the only thing I do is try my best to guide and give the best advice I can to all active military personnel and veterans. I understand from firsthand experience that a lot of needed information is not passed down or a lot of veterans and active-duty personnel are not educated to even inform anyone on the changes that transitioning military members or veterans will experience. I just try to be that bridge and it makes me feel as if I'm doing the right thing and I will continue to do so."



Kenneth Killingsworth | Director, Watco University | Watco | Army, 1990–2022 | Command Sergeant Major (E-9)

"When one's character, purpose and culture align with an organization's, you find yourself following a passion to deliver value to those around you because they matter—that's why veterans choose to serve. To find it once in service to the nation is special but I never thought I would find it twice, so I am truly grateful to find myself following that passion at Watco and to be listed with other veterans that found it."



Nelson Labadie | Project Manager & Board Member of The 7th Branch ERG | Guild Mortgage Company

Navy, 1996–2000 | Petty Officer Third Class (E-4)

"It's a huge honor to be recognized for an achievement like this. To receive an award for doing something I enjoy so much, is incredible. This award is a great acknowledgement for me and for the amazing company I work for, Guild Mortgage."



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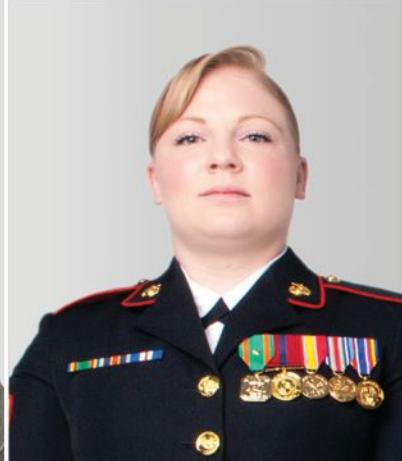
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James Lane | Global EHS Operations & Assurance | The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company
Army Reserve, 1988–1993 | Ohio Military Reserve, 2020–Present | Captain (O-3)

"It's an honor to be part of the Goodyear Veterans Association and a member of Ohio's Military Reserve. The great people in these organizations are an inspiration and it's their work that truly deserves respect. To me, this award is recognition of our collective work and a personal challenge to continue serving, be a light and make a difference. I'm humbled to be featured alongside others who continue to advance veteran experiences in their organizations."



Ruben Martinez | Lead Facilitator – Employee Development | United States Postal Service*
Air Force, 2002–2006 | Senior Airman (E-4)

"I am honored to be selected as a recipient of the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Awards. As I reflect about what the award means to me I think about what I've always loved to do which is to serve others. From the beginning where I served as a firefighter in the United States Air Force and now as a lead facilitator at the (USPS) City Carrier Academy. It has always been my goal to make sure that everyone I've been able to teach is successful. I am grateful to have the opportunity to be able to transition veterans and new employees to their new careers in the postal service. Success comes when you give it your best. I'm thankful for the team that I work with. There is no I in team and it's the US in (USPS) United States Postal Service that makes us great. Thank you again for the selection."



Justin Maunz | People and Development Manager | Safespill | Army, 2002–2017 | Staff Sergeant (E-6)

"Receiving the Employee Veteran Leadership Award is a profound honor, symbolizing not just recognition, but a testament to the values of service, dedication, and leadership that define my journey. It signifies the culmination of my commitment to excellence and the invaluable contributions of veterans in shaping organizational success. This award is not just an accolade; it's a reminder of the enduring impact we can make when guided by purpose and resilience."



Justin McEwen | Wounded Warrior Fellow | The Office of Congressman Ken Calvert | Air Force, 2008–2017 | Staff Sergeant (E-5)

"Advocating for veterans' rights at the federal level has been an esteemed privilege. This acknowledgment reinforces the vital need to support our veterans as they transition into civilian life. I'm deeply thankful for the chance to advocate for them, ensuring they and their families receive the rightful benefits. Let's unite in continuing to champion their cause, as our nation owes them a profound debt of gratitude for their sacrifices in service to our great nation."



Marc Migala | Director, Veterans Health Care Services | UPMC | Army, 1996–2016 | Sergeant First Class (E-7)

"Serving in the military was remarkable, tiring, difficult, and truly the most humbling experience of my life. Continuing to serve after retirement through advancing care delivery specific to veterans across an entire health delivery system has been some of the most rewarding experiences of my career. I am honored to continue to serve veterans at UPMC where we truly do provide Life Changing Medicine."



Fred Mora | Director – Technical Services, Training, Warranty and Customer Relations
Gulf States Toyota | Navy, 1982–1988, 1996–2000 (Reserve) | Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9)



Brian Moss | President | AAAC Wildlife Removal | Army, 1986–2008 | Master Sergeant (E-8)

"Being recognized among veterans in business leadership is truly an honor. Veteran success in the civilian world is a testament to the life lessons instilled by the Army, where I've served for over two decades. Grit, dedication, and perseverance are all essential in navigating challenges and achieving success. This award underscores the importance of resilience, innovation, and commitment—values that I hold dear. Special thanks to my wife, our CEO, whose leadership and collaboration have been instrumental in our achievements."



Damian Padilla | Unit Manager | CoreCivic | Army, 1995–1998 | Specialist (E-4)

"I would like to thank Warden Misty Mackey for nominating me for this award. I am honored and humbled to have been chosen out of many in our company."



Terri Page | VP, Market Operations | Humana | Air Force, 1974–2004 | Colonel (O-6)

"What an unexpected, amazing honor! As an Air Force retiree, I was blessed to start my second career with Humana Military, who has a deep commitment to veterans and military spouses. With values that mirror those I revered during my military service and a keen understanding of the worth that prior military and their spouses bring to the workforce, Humana Military provides the perfect platform for advocacy for our military community. I am extremely proud to receive this award as I have no greater passion than that of Serving our Deserving."



Abigail Peterson | Associate Director, Regulatory Affairs | Merck | Marines, 2013–2017 | Captain (O-3)

"I am honored to be recognized by VICTORY. It's a privilege to support my fellow veterans, helping them navigate passion and purpose in their post-service life. Witnessing the transformative power of veteran talent here at Merck has been a true gift. I feel fortunate to be surrounded by dedicated colleagues within the Veteran Leadership Network and owe much of my success to them as well as my incredible family."



Paul Richardson | President and CEO | Zeiders Enterprises Inc. | Army, 1987–1996 | Major (O-4)

"As a veteran myself, I am honored to be able to pay it forward to other veterans through career focused employment opportunities. Veterans bring a wealth of real-world life experience to the workforce. They are highly skilled, motivated, and flexible professionals with a strong work ethic. I know that as a company, we benefit greatly from the resiliency and commitment to service that make them ideal employees."



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Richard Scott | Manager, Engineering Administration & Vehicle Fleet | Norfolk Southern
Marines, 1990–1995 | Private First Class (E-3)

"I am deeply honored to receive the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Award. This accolade is a tribute to the collective spirit and resilience of veterans, and it motivates me to continue serving with humility and dedication. My heartfelt thanks to all who have supported and inspired me along this journey, including my fellow leadership team and Norfolk Southern Corp. as a whole."



Mihai Sofronic | Global Category Lead - Corporate Strategy and Development

Olympus Corporation of the Americas | Army, 2002–2008 | Major (O-4)

"I am passionate about supporting veterans in the community and developing programs for transitioning service members. The EVLA award is a recognition of my service and commitment to my community!"



Cappy Surette | Senior Manager, Communications | The Walt Disney Company | Navy, 1990–2012 | Captain (O-6)

"Disney has a long history of saluting service members, their families and veterans since the company was founded 100 years ago. I'm honored to be part of a team that continues this proud tradition today. Serving those who served our nation is both a privilege and a profound responsibility."



John Turner | Business Developer | PrimCorp | Army, 1996–2021 | Lieutenant Colonel (O-5)

"Being a veteran and being in a veteran friendly company has been a great experience for me. I am happy to be recognized as a veteran that makes a difference for the company. I focus on hiring new veterans and working with our military advisor to ensure that we help others transition in the smoothest way possible. I look forward to continuing my work and making a difference!"



Karl Williams | Manager, Military and Veteran Services | Easterseals Redwood | Army, 1983–2013 | Master Sergeant (E-8)

"I am honored and humbled to have been chosen for the 2024 Employee Veteran Leadership Award. After leaving the military, I was given another opportunity to serve again by helping veterans, family members and our community that Easterseals Redwood services—nine counties within the Tri-State area (KY, OH and IN). Thank you for the opportunity and believing in me as I continue to advocate for veterans, family members and our community."

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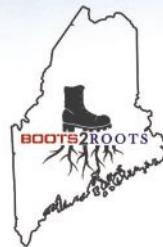
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*Above data sourced from Q4 2023

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Nominations for the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America are open to the general public and were reviewed by a selection committee comprising prior award winners, members of the G.I. Jobs Editorial Advisory Council and G.I. Jobs editorial staff.



2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America

Helping Heroes: Meet 58 folks who relentlessly advocate for America's veterans in the civilian workforce.

BRIAN MORGAN DOESN'T SPEND MUCH TIME AT HIS DESK.

The Navy veteran is a senior talent advisor for CSX who spends considerable time attending recruiting and networking events, building relationships with other organizations that support the military community, or somewhere else in the office advocating for the military.

"But that does not mean he is not available to help. I work with Brian in the Talent Acquisition department, and he always takes the time to answer any questions I have

when it comes to understanding a candidate's resume with military experience—which is frequent,” says Kaitlyn McRae, who works with Morgan in talent acquisition.

McRae was one of 11 people who nominated Morgan for the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America awards, which recognize individuals who advocate for veterans in the civilian workforce. He is typical of the 58 people selected for this year's list. Many gave shout-outs to their teams and were deflective in accepting the praise of those who nominated them.

“I am deeply honored by this recognition, which truly belongs to our entire organization, particularly our dedicated recruiting team,” Morgan said. “At CSX, serving those who served is a fundamental commitment supported from the top down. I'm incredibly proud to be part of a team that wholeheartedly embraces this mission.”

We asked this year's champions, many of whom are veterans themselves, what this award means to them and what inspires them to serve those who served. ▶



Eric Airola | Senior Manager, Military Relations & Inclusion Strategy | J.B. Hunt Transport Inc.

Marine Corps, 1983–1989 | Captain (O-3)

"I am very honored and excited to receive this award! Being on the Inclusion team at J.B. Hunt has empowered me to pursue my passion for helping veterans and transitioning military service members not only find a great career but gain the sense of belonging and respect that comes from an employer who values the talent they bring. I am thankful to have the support of our leaders at every level."



Rob Arndt | CEO | BufferSprings | Marine Corps, 2000–2012 | Gunnery Sergeant (E-7)

"As CEO of BufferSprings, receiving the Veteran Champions of the Year award is a true honor. It highlights our team's commitment to tackling veteran underemployment head-on. We're dedicated to offering innovative solutions that benefit both veterans and forward-thinking companies. This recognition inspires us to keep pushing boundaries and making a real difference. Together, we're reshaping corporate America, creating opportunities, and honoring the invaluable contributions of our nation's veterans."



Matthew Barker | Manager, Workforce Development | Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation

"Hiring veterans and helping facilitate successful pathways from the military to civilian careers is a top priority for Gulfstream, and I am grateful for Military Friendly®'s recognition of our efforts to continue to grow Gulfstream's veteran workforce."



Yvonne Baros | Manager of Safeguards & Security Deployed Security Program | Sandia National Laboratories*

"I am truly grateful to have been honored by the dedicated service men and women of the Deployed Security Program at Sandia Labs. The unwavering dedication of our military never fails to inspire, as they work tirelessly to safeguard our nation. As a staunch supporter and friend of the military, I am fully committed to raising awareness, advocating for these individuals, and promoting opportunities that facilitate successful transitions into civilian careers. Thanks for our freedom!"



**Devon Beard | Director, People Operations (Office of Information Technology, Office of People Science)
US Department of Veterans Affairs**

"Being recognized with the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year award is a profound honor, reflecting my deep commitment to advocating for veterans rights and benefits and fostering supportive services in corporate America. Growing up as a military dependent created my passion to serve those who have served. This award underscores the significance of my team's collective efforts in bridging the gap between veteran and non-veteran employees, and it reaffirms the importance of inclusive leadership and unwavering dedication to service. It's humbling to be acknowledged for contributing to such meaningful initiatives."



Wileen Benjamin | Unit Manager | CoreCivic Houston Processing Center

"It is a complete honor to have been selected for the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America list. Being a child of a veteran, it is understood that they are the true heroes that sacrificed and made the difference. I have firsthand seen the struggles and the adaptation into new normalcy. Having received this recognition ignites my desire to continue advocating both on and off the job. Once again, Thank you!"



Carol Borden | CEO/Founder | Guardian Angels Medical Service Dogs

"As the daughter of a disabled Korean War veteran and mother of a disabled Iraq/Afghanistan veteran, this award is not about me, but rather to bring attention to the plight of our disabled veterans who have sacrificed so much. Our highly skilled working dogs have improved and saved the lives of hundreds of disabled veterans across the country that say they would not be walking this earth today otherwise. We maintain a zero-suicide rate."



Nicholas Boyle | Workforce Development Specialist | Norfolk Naval Shipyard | Navy, 1996–2016 | Petty Officer First Class (E-6)

"I am humbly honored to be recognized for my passion to work with Veterans and Transitioning Servicemembers in my community of Hampton Roads, Virginia, to ensure that they don't fall onto hard times such as I did, and to ensure they have the best opportunities towards a successful transition back to civilian life."



Tasia Bromell | DEI Program Coordinator | RingCentral

"Being honored as a 2024 Champion of the Year is an incredibly humbling recognition. As a DEI leader at RingCentral, the greatest reward lies in fostering inclusive environments for all communities, though the military community holds a special place in my heart. Whether it's through our Military Fellowship Program or collaborating with our US Service Members ERG, I consider it a privilege to contribute to the advancement of veterans and service members at RingCentral."



Greg Burden | Manager, Early Careers | XPO Inc. | Army, 1981–2008 | Command Sergeant Major (E-9)

"I am deeply honored to receive this prestigious award. XPO's commitment to hiring, promoting, and retaining military veterans and active military personnel has provided me with the resources and support necessary to engage with military organizations effectively. This recognition serves as an inspiration to our dedicated team members and reinforces the significance of our work in building strong relationships and providing critical support to military communities as they transition into careers post-service."



Kellie Burke | Diverse Talent Strategy Advancement Lead | Humana

"This award is really about how we put our health first mission in action at Humana. By caring for our Military Connected Talent Community and championing curiosity to pursue diverse perspectives, we are committed to fulfilling our purpose and taking bold action. Being recognized in such a way is really the proof that our actions are impactful for our service members, their family, and our country."



Jonathan Castilaw | Account Manager | MCA | Marines, 2012–2018 | Sergeant (E-5)

"Marines take care of their own. Even after we remove the uniform for good, the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor is still there. I am happy to give back to The Corps and those who serve in it. The Marine Corps has provided so much for me. It was the least I could do to recruit Marines who needed an opportunity while transitioning from active duty or reserving. Semper Fidelis." ▶

**Mary Chitwood | Executive Director, Founder | Robin's Home | Army, 2003–2006 | Specialist (E-4)**

"Being selected as a 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year in Corporate America is an extraordinary validation of the tireless efforts and commitment put forth by the entire team at Robin's Home Inc. Receiving this award is more than just an accolade: it's a testament to the impact of collective action and collaboration. It highlights the vital role that both nonprofit organizations and the corporate sector play in addressing the needs of our nation's veterans."

**Alan Cook | Director of IT | University of Alabama Birmingham | Marine Corps, 1998–2008 | Staff sergeant (E-6)**

"Thank you so much for this esteemed award and recognition. I'm blessed to have been selected and greatly appreciate your work to recognize veterans in the workplace."

**Jennifer Delatte | Veteran Program Administrator | Cedars-Sinai | Army Reserve, 2018–2024 | Sergeant (E-5)**

"For me, this award means that service members and military spouses truly have an advocate during the candidate process. It means employees have a champion to recognize them and make a difference for them in the workplace every day. I am honored and humbled to have this position which creates a positive space for military talent at Cedars-Sinai."

**Greg Dellinger | Director, Outreach and Engagement | AAR Corp.**

"I am humbled by those who have sacrificed so much to defend this nation. At AAR, we know that hiring a veteran is hiring a determined, dedicated individual who knows how to succeed in the mission they are given, and we work hard to bring veterans and transitioning military onto our team. It's an honor to be included among the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America. Best bet: Hire a vet. Oorah!"

**Keith Dotts | CEO | Dotts Group | Army, 1987–2012 | Major (O-4)****Andrew Doyle | Senior Manager - Global Integrated Business Planning | Olympus Corporation of the Americas Army, 2010–2019 | Captain (O-3)**

"I'm honored to be selected as a 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year! My goal as a member of the Olympus Corporation of the Americas Veterans Employee Resource Group is to network and provide peer mentorship to transitioning veterans, and support to Guard/Reserve members looking to advance their careers with our Gold Military Friendly® organization. Creating our Skillbridge Program was a group effort, thanks to Mihai Sofronie, Rachel Jerant, Justin Furlong, & Erica Steffenson."

**Ashleigh Glass | DEI Manager | EnerSys**

"What I appreciate most about receiving this award is the call to action it presents for all to support our service members. Recognizing the sacrifices of the military community is the minimum tribute we can offer. Congratulations to all the awardees."

**Christina Glennon | Senior Director, Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs and Operations**

Levi Strauss and Company | National Guard, 1998–2008 | Sergeant (E-5)

"I'm honored to be recognized as a 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year in Corporate America. It's imperative to me to advocate for the needs of veterans and elevate the military as a community characterized by high skill, strong values and rich diversity, reflecting all walks of life. Throughout my career, I've been proud to champion this cause, and I remain steadfast in my commitment to serving the military community as a leader in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion."

**Greg Hamm | Vice President of Field and Government Recruiting | Werner Enterprises | Army, 1992–1998 | Sergeant (E-5)**

"I am deeply honored to receive the Military Friendly®'s Veteran Champion of the Year award. This recognition is a testament to the dedication of our team at Werner Enterprises and our commitment to supporting veterans and their families. I am proud to have played a role in creating meaningful opportunities for those who have served our country. Thank you to Military Friendly® for this tremendous honor."

**Paul Hannaway | Organizational Development Consultant | Lockheed Martin | Marine Corps, 1997–2024 | Sergeant Major (E-9)**

"This award touches the core of who I am. Our service doesn't end when we hang up our uniforms; it evolves. Being named a Veteran Champion of the Year bridges two worlds for me—serving our nation and continuing to serve those who've served. It's truly an honor to be on the same list as so many great Americans. To all my brothers and sisters in arms, this is for us—Semper Fi."

**Phillip Iddins | HR Senior Specialist - Talent Acquisition | Alight Solutions | Marine Corps, 1999–2019 | Gunnery Sergeant (E-7)**

"Receiving this award is a humbling recognition of the collective effort and dedication of our team. It reaffirms Alight Solutions commitment to excellence and motivates us to continue striving for greatness in everything we do. It's a testament to our shared values and relentless pursuit of success. This award serves as a reminder of the impact we can achieve when we work together towards a common goal."

**Mark Johnson | Director, Quality Engineering & Control, Health & Civil Sector | Leidos* | Navy, 1984–2012 | Senior Chief (E-8)**

"This award is very much appreciated. I feel like it is my obligation to help others who have or are getting ready to transition from the military and the military spouses that bravely serve our country as well. I take great pride in helping others and always task those that I have helped with paying it forward—as all veterans, that can do, should do. Thanks so much for this wonderful recognition!" ▶



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**Nathan King | SVP, Head of Next Generation Banking Implementations | FIS | Navy, 1998–2004 | Lieutenant (O-3)**

"It's an honor to be recognized by Military Friendly® as a 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year. I am grateful to be at FIS, where I am afforded the tremendous opportunity to continue my service and be surrounded by inspirational teammates. This award serves to credential the effort of our FIS Salute Veterans Network and People Office to serve our veterans and military families and make FIS a workplace of choice for the veteran community."

**Lee Kirby | Co-Founder/Chairman | Salute | Army, 1976–2012 | Colonel (O-6)**

"The award validates that the passion our team has for veterans and military spouses has driven results worthy of recognition and that is a great honor. My hope is that it will serve as an inspiration to other companies to establish effective transition and training programs so that we can help even more veterans and military spouses begin civilian careers after serving our great country."

**Heather Kline | Talent Acquisition Specialist | Client Solution Architects | Navy, 1988–2010****Lieutenant Commander (O-4) | Army Spouse**

"Wow, I was truly humbled to be amongst the winners of this recognition. I share it, wholeheartedly, with my CSA team and fellow military veterans, advocates and influencers. It's one team, one mission, and I don't take that lightly, not for a second. It's my solemn vow and duty to champion all veterans, milspouses and their families. I have two families, one that I was born into and one that I was sworn into. Thank you for this long standing tradition and honor."

**Dylan Kodad | National Veteran Advocate | Apex Systems | Marine Corps, 2013–2017 | Corporal (E-4)**

"I am deeply honored and humbled to receive this award. It has been extremely rewarding for me to be in a position to have an impact on this community. This award is for all of the transitioning service members, veterans, military spouses and military family members who have found meaningful employment with us here at Apex Systems. I look forward to continuing to support them on their journey as they navigate the civilian workplace. Semper Fidelis!"

**Stacey Lane | Chief Executive Officer | Staffmark Group**

"Being named to this list is truly the result of a team effort. At Staffmark Group, our commitment to veterans is ingrained in our DNA. Whether it's through our Military Alliance Business Resource Group, our Operation: Hired military and veteran recruiting program, or our SkillBridge program that helps service members put their unique skills and experience to work in civilian careers, this is our chance to serve those who have served our country."

**Thomas Marsland | Board Chair | VetSec Inc. | Navy, 2001–2024 | Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9)**

"This award holds special significance for me, as it validates the importance of my work to support veterans transitioning into the cybersecurity industry. My journey from the Navy to leading technology strategy is a testament to the fact that the skills, discipline, and leadership cultivated in military service are invaluable assets that can drive success in any field. I am grateful for this accolade and hope to inspire others to help those who have served."

**TJ Martin | Senior Manager, Military Recruiting Program | USIC | Army, 1996–2022 | Command Sergeant Major (E-9)**

"It is an honor to be selected as a 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year in Corporate America awardee. It is truly humbling and inspiring to know that the passion I have for our nation's veterans, service members, and families does not go unnoticed. After more than 25 years of service in the military, I am incredibly fortunate to be able to continue engaging, promoting, and mentoring the hiring of service members. My role, along with my supportive leadership at USIC has allowed me to develop veteran-centric initiatives to support the careers and character of our military connected employees."

**Casey McEuin | Head of Inclusion and Diversity | Michaels Stores Inc. | Army, 2001–2014 | Staff Sergeant (E-6)**

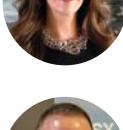
"I am honored to receive this award on behalf of Michaels, where everyone has a seat at our craft table! It is a tremendous honor to assist veterans, military spouses, and underserved/under-represented populations in having a place where they truly feel a sense of belonging."

**Rick McManigal | Military Recruiting Manager | Capital One | Marine Corps, 1991–1997 | Sergeant (E-5)**

"As a Marine Corps veteran, I appreciate that the talent produced by our services is vast and I am continually grateful to champion military candidates for civilian opportunities. For the past two decades, I've been privileged enough to place hundreds of military candidates across many industries. While I am humbled and honored to receive this recognition, it belongs most to the capable and talented veterans I have had the opportunity to represent."

**Michelle Mills | Recruiting Manager - North American Military Talent Acquisition | Amazon | Air Force Spouse**

"Being selected as one of the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year is both humbling and deeply gratifying. It reinforces my commitment to advocating for those who have served our nation and highlights the importance of supporting our veterans and military spouses. The award is a testament to the collective effort of many, and I'm honored to be part of a community dedicated to honoring and empowering the military-connected community."

**Brian Morgan | Senior Talent Advisor, Diversity, Talent Acquisition | CSX Transportation****Navy, 2003–2009 | Petty Officer Second Class (E-5)**

"I am deeply honored by this recognition, which truly belongs to our entire organization, particularly our dedicated recruiting team. At CSX, serving those who served is a fundamental commitment supported from the top down. I'm incredibly proud to be part of a team that wholeheartedly embraces this mission. This recognition fuels our dedication to continue supporting the military community, and I'm very grateful for the opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful cause."

**Ricardo Munoz | Talent Acquisition Lead, DOD Skillbridge Program | Mission Technologies, a division of HII Army, 1997–2018 | Chief Warrant Officer 3 (W-3)**

"Grateful and humbled to be recognized as a Veteran Champion of the Year in Corporate America. It's an honor to advocate for and support fellow veterans and military spouses in the civilian workplace. This award is a testament to the hard work of my team who share the same passion for creating a welcoming environment for our veterans at HII Mission Technologies. Thank you to Military Friendly® for this recognition and for supporting our veterans."

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**Jennifer Murphy | Senior HR Manager – Talent Recruitment Service Delivery | GE Aerospace**

"Receiving the 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year award is both a professional and personal honor. Though I haven't served, my family's military background imbued me with deep respect for veterans. I'm dedicated to transforming how we recruit and retain veterans in GE Aerospace. By valuing their diverse skills and fostering inclusivity, we empower them for success. Collaborating with veterans' organizations, I'm privileged to contribute to their seamless transition into civilian careers. Let's continue advocating for their prosperity."

**Scott Nichol | Government & International Business Development Manager | Shoppa's Material Handling**

Navy, 1980–2007 | Captain (O-6)

"I have won a number of awards during my military and civilian career. This one means a great deal to me because it is a true team effort by everyone here at Shoppa's Material Handling. I was just the one who steered the ship. There are many companies in the country who compete with us. But none of them have the team we have here who are dedicated to doing their best and working as a team to take care of our customers. Many of our employees learned that dedication and teamwork while serving our country."

**Erik Orient | Director, Military Affairs and Student Initiatives | UPMC Health Plan | Marine Corps, 1991–2013 | Major (O-4)**

"I am personally and professionally proud to receive this award. I benefited enormously from Marine Corps service, so being able to support the vibrant military and veteran community through my civilian work brings great satisfaction and purpose. I am honored to be part of UPMC Health Plan's efforts in this area and am grateful to be part of a company that makes being Military Friendly® more than just a cliché or words on a website."

**Shannon Parker | Military & Veteran Recruiter | Watco | National Guard, 1997–2006 | Staff Sergeant (E-6)**

"Thank you to Military Friendly® for this recognition. I love what I do and truly appreciate the ability to be able to create a relationship with separating service members and share information about how Watco could be their next step."

**Tia Prevo | Director, Talent Acquisition & Onboarding | Allegiant Air**

"As a military spouse I know how important it is to establish strong career continuity while supporting our service members. It has been an honor to help integrate both parts of my life. I love being able to assist veterans, retirees and military spouses with finding fulfilling careers!"

**Kelsey Rasmussen | Senior Loan Officer | Guild Mortgage Company | Military Spouse, Air Force Reserve**

"Being chosen for the Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America award is an honor which has left me speechless. I am grateful to work for a company that provides me a platform to help a community that I love."

**Zbigniew "Zig" Resiak | Utility Manager | American States Utility Services Inc. | Navy, 1979–1988 | Petty Officer 1st Class (E-6)**

"It is truly an honor to be amongst the 58 distinguished recipients this year. There is an old adage that says courage and integrity are built in the quiet hours when no one is around and where you're left with only a flicker of light to guide you. Like so many other veterans, their families and advocates know, transition from warfighter to civilian is challenging, confusing and at times can become overwhelming. It's there that my colleagues and distinguished VCOY recipients are found, in the quiet doing anything and everything we can sometimes with only a flicker of light to help our heroes with navigating their new opportunities and challenges but never alone. Congratulations to this year's VCOY cohort."

**Angie Rochester | Senior Recruiter/Employment Manager | The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina***

"I feel very blessed to be recognized for this award! As an "Army brat," I saw how hard it was for my father to transition out of the military after 28 years of service and try to start over again in the civilian workforce. I can remember the struggles he went through, and it stuck with me. Now as a human resources professional, I feel it is my duty to try to help veterans. Even if it is just talking to applicants who are transitioning out of the service about ways to get their resume in front of people or just being a listening ear for them, I know I am doing my job."

**Cheri Rubocki | Director of Talent Acquisition | Old National Bank**

"I am honored to be selected for this recognition. With the challenges veterans face while transitioning back to civilian life, I am proud to work for an organization that is committed to supporting that transition by offering programs such as mentoring and our Military Impact Network. It's important for all of us to continue to support our service members, veterans and their families for the sacrifices they make for us."

**Monique Ruiz | Military Liaison | Texas Department of Family and Protective Services | National Guard, 2001–2022 | Major (O-4)**

"If it were not for the support of my leadership, my ideas for our MilVets program would be only scribbles on a notepad. I'm eternally grateful to have their trust in my military expertise to create the specialized programs and services we offer to these unique employees. Being named a Veteran Champion of the Year solidifies the importance of what I do to continue making progress and be the employer of choice."

**John Schuman | President's Club Recruiter | Rocket Companies | Marine Corps, 2010–2016 | Corporal (E-4)**

"This US Marine is very proud to represent ROCKET COMPANIES. I'm honored by the opportunity to help support my brothers and sisters daily. Forever grateful to ROCKET for taking a chance on me in 2015. Truly, an honor and pleasure to have received this recognition. As 'Johnny Rocket' I'm very passionate about the work RKT is doing in the veteran space. It's a privilege to represent this company, my teammates, and our veteran and spouse community. Thank you, ROCKET COMPANIES, for the unwavering commitment to supporting our veterans and families since 2012. Climb RKT, Climb!"

**Joe Sekely | Recruiter | Pittsburgh Regional Transit | Marine Corps, 1998–2015 | Staff Sergeant (E-6)**

"The recognition of 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America, presented by Military Friendly®, is an honor. Even though I no longer wear the uniform, I still serve this country and those who served by employing them at this wonderful company. Understanding the value of hiring veterans and how their experience and knowledge can be utilized is key to my hiring strategy. Pittsburgh Regional Transit embraces diversity, especially within the veteran community."

**Caleb Sexon | Asset Inventory Manager | ADM | Army, 2007–2011 | Sergeant (E-5)**

"It is with great honor that I accept this award on behalf of the great work ADM and our Veterans Employee Resource Group is doing to support our veterans internally and within our local communities. It is a vital mission that we don't take lightly in supporting these heroes. This award simply validates our great work and cause!"

**Irving Smith | Senior Director, Veterans Initiatives | ADP | Army, 1983–2014 | Colonel (O-6)**

"As a proud veteran, I am honored to receive this award as a veteran champion. Each day, I strive to make a difference by hiring fellow veterans and military spouses nationwide. This recognition validates my commitment to supporting those who have served our country. It is a privilege to contribute to their successful transition into civilian life, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving my fellow veterans in this meaningful way."

**Jonathan Snider | Military Affairs Program Manager | HCA Healthcare | Army, 2006–2013 | First Lieutenant (O-2)**

"It's an honor to be recognized amongst this year's class of veteran champions. Being a veteran champion for the military community of HCA Healthcare means I wake up focusing on the first three words of our mission, 'Above all else,' a relentless commitment to removing barriers and cultivating a stronger military community that achieves excellence for our patients, colleagues and communities."

**Raina Stevens | Veterans Liaison | PRIDE Industries | Army, 1998–2005 | Corporal (E-4)**

"Being recognized as a Veteran Champion of the Year in Corporate America is a profound honor, reflecting not just my personal journey but also the commitment of our organization to support and empower veterans. This recognition symbolizes the invaluable contributions veterans bring to the workforce and serves as a reminder of the importance of fostering inclusivity and appreciation for those who have served our country."

**Justin Stone | Quality Engineer | Draper | Air Force, 1999–2020 | Major (O-4)**

"I started helping transitioning veterans because of the issues I had during my transition. I retired at the start of COVID lock-downs and saw my opportunities disappear. It was a very stressful time, but my mentors helped me get through it. Those volunteers inspired me to give back. This award does not recognize my achievements, but the achievements of those volunteers helping veterans every day to find jobs."

**Dustin Walker | Regional Maintenance Manager | C&W Services | Navy, 2000–2006 | Petty Officer Third Class (E-4)**

"Receiving the 2024 Veteran Champions of the Year in Corporate America award is a profound honor that transcends personal achievement. It symbolizes a collective recognition of the resilience, leadership, and unwavering commitment that veterans bring to the corporate landscape. This moment is not just about me; it's a tribute to all veterans who tirelessly strive to excel and inspire within the corporate world. Together, we are building bridges and shaping futures."

**Haley Weaver | Head of Military Relations | The Home Depot | Army Spouse**

"Being named a 2024 Veteran Champion of the Year in Corporate America is both a privilege and a responsibility. It symbolizes the collective dedication of The Home Depot team to honor and uplift our military veterans. This award reinforces our commitment to providing meaningful pathways for veterans to thrive post-service, harnessing their unique skills and experiences to drive success not only within our organization but also across the broader community. It's not just about recognition; it's about continuing to serve those who have served us so selflessly. Thank you for this tremendous honor."

**Hannelore Weber | Market Director | LHH Recruitment Solutions****Steve Weston | Military Program Recruiter | Verizon* | Air Force, 2000–2022 | Master Sergeant (E-7)**

"As a former career military recruiter, when I joined Verizon in 2022, I was again blessed with the opportunity to aid the community via individual mentorship sessions, information sessions, networking events, and best practice workshops. Connecting vets/milspouses to the right networks on LinkedIn, other veteran influencers, and consulting business leaders on the value of veteran talent is something I am passionate about. Being recognized as part of the '2024 Veteran Champions list' is truly an honor."

**Michael Zeiders | Chairman | Zeiders Enterprises Inc. | Navy, 1975–1980 | Lieutenant (O-3)**

"I appreciate Military Friendly®'s focus on creating a link between the veteran community and the companies that want to hire them. For 40 years, Zeiders Enterprises' mission has been to improve the quality of life of service members, families and veterans. My hope is that this award encourages corporate leaders to recognize the talent and commitment that veterans and military spouses bring to the workplace."

SECURE YOUR FUTURE WITH A CYBERSECURITY CAREER

THERE ARE FEW OCCUPATIONS WITH A BRIGHTER FUTURE THAN CYBERSECURITY.

Every organization is dependent on information technology, which in turn requires cybersecurity. The demand is high, the pay is generous, and veterans with security clearances have an edge. These professionals are in demand in every industry.

We talked to two veterans working in cybersecurity in two different industries to give you a glimpse of their world.

Where did you grow up? Western New York (Buffalo/Niagara Falls)

What was your military job? My job throughout my years as an officer as I worked in progressively higher levels of the chief information officer (CIO) offices in different Marine Corps organizations had four main components: First, plan how my organization would use telephones, radios and computers to achieve their military mission. Second, supervise the installation of the architecture that was planned. Third, ensure the daily running of the network in support of the unit's missions. Fourth, maintain the network.

What was your biggest fear as you prepared to transition from the military? That I would be able to find a company based in the D.C. area with a Military Friendly® culture that I could embrace their mission.

What did your biggest challenge turn out to be? Learning to connect with my co-workers primarily using TEAMS and a phone. It is a very different work environment than being in the office everyday.

Why did you choose this career field? I have deep experience in the information technology and cybersecurity field and enjoy the

ever-changing nature of the field. You must be a life-long learner to maintain your understanding and skills.

Why did you choose defense? I believed that I could continue to help support the defense of our country through working in the defense industrial base.

How did you find this job? I was matched with Leidos through the Hiring our Heroes Fellowship program, completing a fellowship with them in November 2023. I was offered a full-time job at the end of my fellowship.

Please summarize your current job. I support Marine Corps Cyberspace Operations Group (MCCOG) in their cybersecurity section as a subject matter expert. I am tasked with working on varying projects to improve both the short-term and long-term cybersecurity for the MCCOG.

What do you love about your job? Seeing the positive difference that I and my Leidos teammates make in hardening the cybersecurity of the MCCOG and the Marine Corps.

What's the biggest challenge? With this being my first job out of uniform, deciding what clothes to wear to the office each day and remembering that as a contractor I offer recommendations to government leadership to determine the appropriate next step.

What days and hours do you typically work? I generally work 45-50 hours a week Monday through Friday, with a few hours of work on a normal weekend.

Would you recommend this career field and industry? Yes, the information technology/cybersecurity field is very diverse and you can come in from almost any other field and find a corresponding role in the field. There is a critical shortage of these career fields in the United States.



COLONEL

BRET HYLA

Marine Corps Account Client Manager
Navy and Marine Corps IT Business Area
Leidos*

JOB LOCATION: Quantico, Va.

EMPLOYED SINCE: December 2023

AGE: 54

MILITARY SERVICE:

Colonel (O-6), Marine Corps (1989–2023)

MOS: Ground Officer (8041)/
Communications Officer (0602)

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

Bachelor's degree, business administration,
Texas A&M University, 1997

Master's degree, computer science,
Naval Postgraduate School, 2006

Master's degree, strategic studies,
Army War College, 2018

Certifications:

Certified Information Systems Security Professional, 2007

Certified Cloud Security Professional, 2023

Project Management Professional, 2023

What mistakes would you urge transitioning service members to avoid? Failing to file for their VA disability while on active duty. You can start a Benefits Delivery at Discharge claim six months prior to your separation from active duty. Seek out a local veteran service organization to have an accredited representative file the claim on your behalf.

What about you would surprise most people? That after 34 years in the Marine Corps, I could swiftly switch off the rank and be a junior team member again. ☺



CAPTAIN

MATTHEW J. ROMANO

Executive Director, Service Policy
Assurance & Customer Security Assurance
Comcast

TELECOM

EMPLOYED SINCE: 2016

MILITARY SERVICE:

Captain (O-3), Army (2005–2009)

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

Bachelor's degree, integrated science business and technology,
La Salle University, 2005

Certifications:

Business analytics, University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School, 2018

Artificial intelligence, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019

CISM training, 2022

Data loss prevention, Proofpoint, 2022

Phishing specialist, Proofpoint, 2022

Ransomware Specialist, Proofpoint, 2023

and mission-focused. I learned how to navigate through challenges with determination and support my team while successfully completing the task at hand. This mindset has proven to be invaluable in my civilian career, especially when faced with high-pressure situations that demand quick thinking and a steadfast commitment to results.

What's the biggest challenge?

The most significant challenge in cybersecurity is the ever-evolving nature of threats. It's like a complex, high-stakes game that demands adaptability, constant learning and a strategic approach to stay ahead of potential risks.

How would you characterize the pay and benefits? In the cybersecurity field, the compensation packages are highly competitive, reflecting the critical nature of the job.

Do veterans who want to get into cybersecurity need to earn a college degree, or can they get started with certifications?

Entering the cybersecurity domain can be accomplished through both academic degrees and professional certifications. A degree provides a solid foundation, while certifications can offer a direct path to acquiring practical, job-ready skills. For veterans transitioning into civilian careers, certifications might offer a more immediate entry point into the field.

How would you characterize the opportunity for cybersecurity professionals today? Cybersecurity professionals are in high demand, and this trend is poised to continue as the need for secure digital infrastructures becomes ever more critical. Opportunities in this field are abundant, and those with the right skills can expect to find numerous avenues for career advancement. ■

Where did you grow up?

Bensalem, Pa., and Blackwood, N.J.

What did you do in the military?

Initially, I was a battalion chemical officer but transitioned to an infantry platoon leader and later served as a brigade current operations officer.

What was your biggest fear as you prepared to transition from the military? I was apprehensive about how well people in the civilian sector would understand my military background and the skills I gained while serving.

What did your biggest challenge turn out to be? My greatest challenge was learning to be a more effective leader in the civilian workplace, which meant adapting and evolving my leadership style to better meet the needs of my civilian teams.

Why did you choose this career field? I chose tech because I wanted to be at the forefront of innovation.

Why did you choose this industry? The tech industry presents endless opportunities for growth and learning, and I'm always seeking new ways to expand my knowledge and impact.

What was your first job out of the military? My first civilian role was in operations management at Walmart, which served as an excellent crash course in running large-scale operations and sharpening my financial acumen and discipline.

Any humorous moments during your transition? In my early days post-transition, I vividly remember running a meeting at Walmart where I employed some of the motivational tactics from my military days. The colorful language certainly had an effect—it brought the house down with laughter. While it was a lesson in corporate culture for me, it also showed the lighter side of adapting to civilian life.

Please summarize your current job. I play a strategic role in protecting our company's infrastructure and customer information against cyber threats and fraud. When issues arise, my team and I are on the front lines, working tirelessly to resolve and rectify them promptly.

How has your military training and experience helped you in your civilian career? The military taught me how to be resilient

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JOBS IN HIGH DEMAND

Looking for good pay and job security? These two veterans found them in the skilled trades.



 STAFF SERGEANT

LOAM MANTOOOTH

Truck Driver
Werner Enterprises

JOB LOCATION: Family Dollar Distribution Center, Rome, NY

EMPLOYED SINCE: 2018

MILITARY SERVICE:

Staff Sergeant (E-6), Army (1998–2018)

MOS: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Specialist (74D)

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

License:

Commercial Driver's License (CDL), National Truck Driving School, 2018

Certification:
Doubles Endorsement

NEARLY A QUARTER OF TRADESPeOPLE ARE NEARING RETIREMENT, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics recently pointed out. What does that mean to you? Skilled trade workers are already in high demand, and that won't change anytime soon.

We talked to two veterans who apply their military training and experience to civilian careers in skilled trades.

After 20 years in the Army, Staff Sgt. Loam Mantooth was nervous about the next chapter in his life. He quickly found his new calling: driving a tractor-trailer for Werner Enterprises in upstate New York.

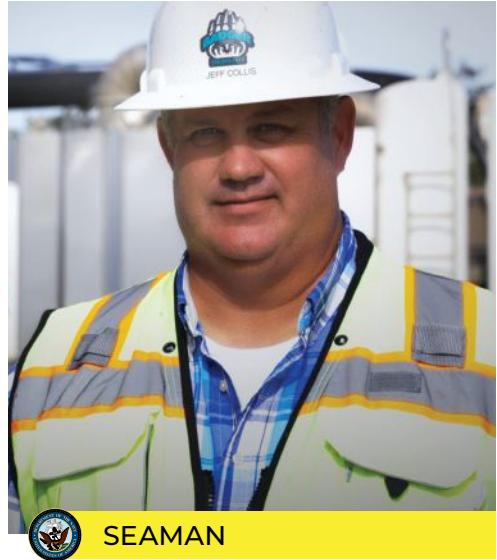
Why did you choose this career field? I stumbled upon it. I was in the process of preparing for retirement from the Army through classes intended to help soldiers transition into the civilian

workforce when I came across a recruiter for National Truck Driving School (NTTS). I discussed it with my wife and we agreed it would be a good start at a first job after separation from military service. Once I started with Werner on the Family Dollar account I ended up really enjoying it.

Please summarize your current job. In a nutshell I drive around to multiple stores delivering roughly 80% of the products people purchase at the Family Dollar stores.

What do you love most about this career field? I'm not in one place every day. Instead of going to the same office daily I get to work out of different locations within the Northeast region.

How are the pay and benefits? Pay is fantastic. I use mostly my military benefits for myself and my family. ■



JEFF COLLIS

*Director of Disaster Response
Badger Infrastructure Solutions*

EMPLOYED SINCE: November 2014

AGE: 50

MILITARY SERVICE:
Seaman (E-3), Navy (1994–1996)

RATING: Quartermaster

Jeff Collis was medically discharged from the Navy after three years. He found a home in emergency response and remediation, starting as an equipment operator and working his way through the ranks.

Please describe your current job.

As the director of disaster response at Badger Infrastructure Solutions, I oversee the delivery of hydro excavation services for disaster and emergency response, environmental remediation, and industrial maintenance projects across North America. I lead a team of highly trained and certified professionals who are committed to providing safe, efficient, and reliable solutions for our clients. I also manage the

sales and operational aspects of the emergency services division, ensuring the quality, profitability, and growth of our business.

What do you love about your job?

Meeting new people. Helping people in need.

What's the biggest challenge?

Moving into a devastated area and establishing lodging, food supply, fuel supply and all other necessary items for your equipment and personnel.

What days and hours do you typically work?

Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. But I'm on call 24/7 to respond when needed. ☎



We are proud to share that Roche Diagnostics USA has received the **Military Friendly® Top Ten award** for the second time.

This year, Roche ranked No. 8 among other U.S. employers.

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MARINE CORPS SERVICE TAUGHT LASTING VALUE OF TEAMWORK

I lead the organization that plans, designs and builds Windstream's network.

In the Marine Corps, I was a 2881 Full Maintenance Crypto Technician. I had a Top-Secret security clearance and worked on the coding of multiple electronic devices to ensure secure communications. In that role, I quickly learned the importance of teamwork. We had to work together to complete the missions assigned to us.

Similar to the military, Windstream prioritizes a supportive environment. We ensure that all individuals are valued and treated with care. Veterans are a terrific fit for Windstream because they have a desire to succeed and a great work ethic. In turn, the company truly appreciates those who have served.

Windstream has built a culture that helps people advance and achieve their career goals. That's true for all employees, but veterans will feel especially welcome because there are a large number of us here who want to support you and see you succeed in civilian life.

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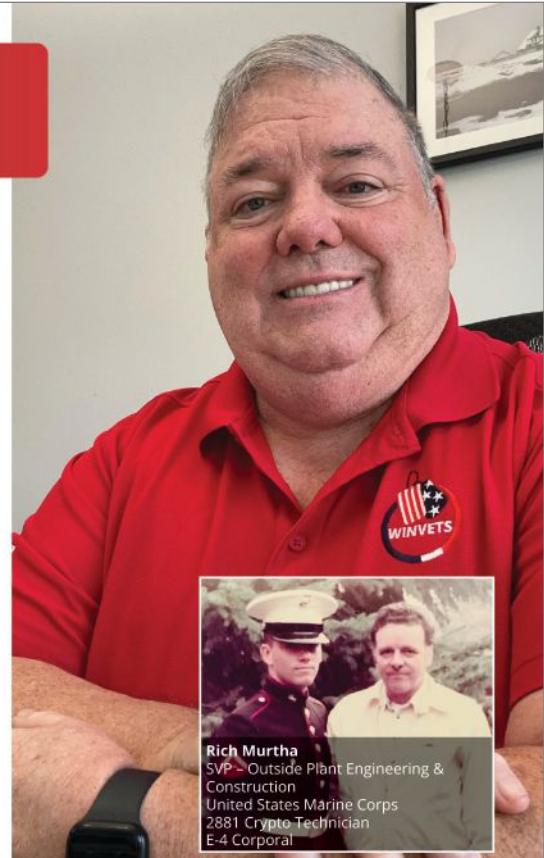
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Rich Murtha
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United States Marine Corps
2881 Crypto Technician
E-4 Corporal



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