



# Ohio Department of Veterans Services

★ *Monthly Update* ★

July 2012



**VETERAN  
HIRING FAIR  
DETROIT**



The VA sponsored a 3-day hiring fair and small business conference in Detroit during the last week of June.

The VA reported that job offers were extended to 1,300 veterans throughout the Midwest region.

## Questions about veterans benefits?

Call 1-877-OHIOVET  
(1-877-644-6838)

*Welcome to the sixteenth edition of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services e-newsletter! The newsletter is a key source of information about issues of interest to our community of veterans in Ohio.*

We thank you for your service to our country. Because you're a veteran, you've earned a number of benefits that you may not be aware of. Most of these benefits originate at the federal level with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Based on the time you served, you may be eligible for compensation for injuries, health care, educational assistance, home loans or many other benefits. There are also a number of state benefits available to Ohio veterans, to include the Ohio Veterans Bonus as well as direct financial assistance from the county to veterans in need.

The place to find out what you've earned and to apply is your county veterans service office. You can locate yours in the interactive map on our department home page, [www.ohiovet.gov](http://www.ohiovet.gov), or by calling 1-877-OHIO-VET (1-877-644-6838).

We will continue to provide you this newsletter each month. We hope it's of value to you and your family.

## High-Profile June Job Events Bring Dividends for Veterans...

Two major June events in Detroit and Cleveland brought hiring offers to more than 1,330 veterans.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (the VA) hosted a Veterans Hiring Fair at Cobo Center in Detroit from June 26-28. It was held in conjunction with the Veterans Small Business Conference the same week.

This conference also featured a Veteran Open House, where attendees can visit various displays to learn about the many federal and state benefits available for veterans.

An estimated 8,000 veterans attended the conference, and 5,500 interviews were conducted, according to the VA, resulting in offers being extended to 1,300 of the veterans at the conference. This exceeded an event earlier this year in Baltimore, where 2,600 veterans were interviewed and 500 received job offers.



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A “Hiring Our Heroes” event in Cleveland on June 29, sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, was smaller in scope but also bore positive results. Over 440 veterans were present in Cleveland, and they sat for 132 interviews conducted by employers there. Out of these, 16 veterans received firm job offers, while 26 were extended conditional offers.

Look for news of future job fairs in this newsletter and through our social media. Go to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services’ home page, [www.ohiovet.gov](http://www.ohiovet.gov), to check out our social media and sign up for our e-mail listserv for news updates.

And remember, always consider finding a job to be just like another mission in the military – know what your responsibilities are and prepare yourself.

Are you physically prepared for a job search/hiring event? Whatever type of employment is being sought, there are some common tips to remember:

- Have a current resume;
- Have a cover letter that’s geared to the type of job being sought;
- Present a professional appearance, e.g., suit and tie, or dress/skirt or pantsuit.

## Sign up Fast for VRAP...

Thousands of veterans nationwide are signing up for the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP), a new VA program to aimed at helping unemployed veterans aged 35-60 get re-trained and re-employed.

VRAP is part of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, passed by Congress last year. The program offers up to 12 months of job training assistance under the Montgomery G.I. Bill at the rate of \$1,473 per month. The program began July 1, but applications will be accepted until September 30.



**Please note** that applications must be made online through the VA’s eBenefits program. A web tool will assist veterans in working through this, but it is recommended to get an early start on the process.

For more information, see: <http://benefits.va.gov/vow/education.htm>



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## Ohio Means Veterans Getting Jobs...



Veterans in Ohio can go a long way toward getting themselves employed with the click of a mouse.

One mouse click away is “Ohio Means Jobs,” the state’s job web site which has a real advantage for veterans by getting them to the front of the line for available jobs. The site is the result of a partnership between Ohio and Monster.com; take a look at it below, and then learn more about how it works for veterans:

<https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omi/>

Once on the site, veterans should go to the “Job Seekers” area, and a world of opportunity opens up. Veterans need to post their resume and indicate that

they are a veteran. What this does is present veterans’ resumes first for any job that matches the qualifications they’ve posted in their resume. The resume should be reviewed every month and electronically “updated” – whether any additional information is added or not – to keep it refreshed and at the front of the line for jobs.

This site has a searchable data base of thousands of jobs across Ohio, with private business, federal, state and local government, and schools. While it’s still advisable to check local ads in the places in Ohio you’d like to be, the Monster.com system will capture the great majority of employment ads from throughout the state.

There’s also a military widget on Ohiomeansjobs.com that will automatically links to additional information for veterans. This includes resources to help build a resume by translating military experience to civilian terms. It also includes links to veteran-friendly employers – companies that have made a commitment to hire veterans – as well as other resources:

<http://my.ohiomeansjobs.monster.com/VetCenter/InfoCenter.aspx>

One challenge veterans always have is translating what they did in the military into terms civilians can understand. The Army and the Navy have developed online “cool” web sites that help veterans translate their military skills into terms civilian employers can understand. The sites, which stand for “credentialing opportunities online,” allow a veteran to select their military skill code and then see the types of jobs their training and experience translates to, as well as any certifications that are needed. There is no Air Force, Marine, or Coast Guard “cool” site. However, the Air Force does offer similar resources on its Community College of the Air Force site, at the Credentialing and Education Research Tool (CERT) page;



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Marine skills are similar to those found in the Army and Air Force; and Coast Guard skills are similar to those found in the Navy.

The “cool” sites are below:

<https://www.cool.army.mil/index.htm>

<https://www.cool.navy.mil/overview.htm>

<https://augateway.maxwell.af.mil/ccaf/certifications/programs/>

And don't forget that the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is in an active partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor to operate Job Centers in each county, usually centrally located in the county seat; contact information is easily accessible by searching online or in the phone book. The Job Centers are open to all residents, but are also staffed with counselors who specifically assist veterans. Periodically, the Job Centers work with local partners to host regional job fairs across the state, which we'll tell you about here.

The Ohio National Guard is also heavily involved in the issue of veteran employment. The Guard has partnered with AMVETS to create this web site, which features job postings for veterans:

<http://ohiovetscan.com/>

## **From a Troop to a Teacher...**

One potential job for many returning veterans is that of a teacher. It's a skill that many already have from degrees they've earned before or during their military service, as well as from training other troops throughout their careers.

If a veteran has a degree and the kind of background that lends itself to education, it's definitely worth their while to check out the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program. TTT helps veterans in getting teaching certificates, and offers counseling and mentoring to place them in high-needs schools where they will not only teach, but also serve as positive role models to youths in schools and the local communities.

There's also good odds at finding a job – the TTT program administered by the Ohio Department of Veterans Services partnered with ROTC on a national level and placed 38 veterans in teaching jobs across Ohio, representing quite a leap from the nine hired the previous year.



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Interested veterans should call Chris Pica at (614) 728-4801, toll-free at 1-(800) 852-6064, via e-mail at [chris.pica@dvs.ohio.gov](mailto:chris.pica@dvs.ohio.gov), or visit: [http://dvs.ohio.gov/veterans\\_education/troops\\_to\\_teachers.aspx](http://dvs.ohio.gov/veterans_education/troops_to_teachers.aspx)

## Back to School...

Need to complete a degree to become a teacher, or to earn marketable skills? It's never too early or too late to plan to improve your chances through education – it's the surest way to find a job or advance in a current job. Today's Post-9/11 G.I. Bill offers the best financial incentives for veterans' education since World War II. Besides traditional degrees, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill also includes vocational training that wasn't covered under previous programs. Find out more at:

<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>

Ohio's system of public colleges and universities provides veterans plenty of choice in where to pursue their education. These institutions offer hundreds of academic disciplines, many that can lead directly to a lucrative career. The state has initiated several measures in recent years to make it easier for veterans to get an education here, whether they're Ohio residents or not, such as in-state tuition rates for all veterans, Veterans Administration (VA)-certified counselors at financial aid offices, and student organizations to serve veterans on campus. The Board of Regents site, below, will tell you more; or, you can search out information online for the Ohio public college or university you're interested in:

<http://www.ohiohighered.org/veterans>





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## House Bill 490 Helps Veterans....

On June 26, Governor John R. Kasich signed House Bill 490, a veterans' benefits bill that was part of the Governor's Mid-Biennium Review. The bill helps streamline benefits claim processing while significantly boosting education benefits for some veterans' families. A summary of the major provisions is below:

- Allows County Veterans Service Officers to directly access DD 214's from county recorders in order to use these documents to accompany veterans' claims. This will streamline claims processing at the local level.
- Allows the Ohio Department of Veterans Services to move toward a paperless distribution system to inform Ohio residents of the services provided by each county veterans' service commission. This is already underway with the establishment of the department's listserv and the work that began last year to provide a web presence for counties that had none, which currently has 87 of 88 counties online.
- Adds a member of the National Guard Association of the United States to the department's veterans advisory committee. This permits a more effective representation of the needs and concerns of both Guard and Reserve service members and veterans, in light of the greatly increased deployments of these components since 9/11.
- Establishes a standard of eligibility for in-state tuition at Ohio's public colleges and universities that improves access to education for spouses and children of deceased service members. Previously, a veteran had to be living for a spouse or child to be considered "in-state." This provision is now eliminated, so as to not unfairly penalize the eligible family members.

This legislation enhances Ohio's position as a veteran-friendly state.

## Honoring Korean War Veterans...

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services is marking Korean War Day in Ohio with a special ceremony at Ohio's Statehouse on Friday, July 27, at 10 a.m. in the Statehouse Museum Area, Ground Floor. Ohio veterans of all eras and the public are cordially invited to the Statehouse to honor this era of veterans on the 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the war in Korea. If you have any artifacts from the Korean War that you would like to have on display that day please call Karen Kish at (614) 752-8941.





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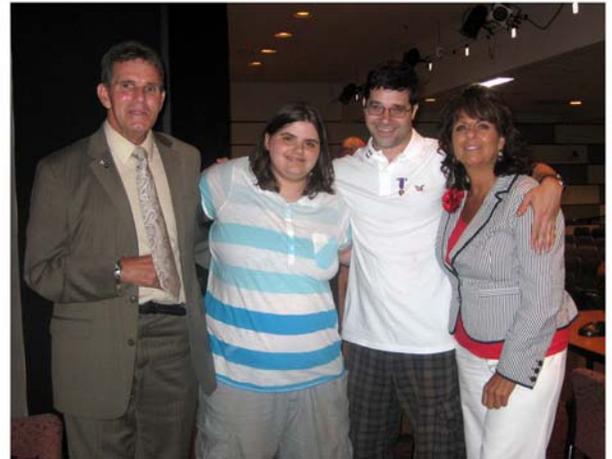
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## Honoring Those Who've Survived TBI...

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services sponsored a panel discussion on the causes, effects and treatment of Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) among both veterans and the public on Monday, July 9. The panel featured both TBI survivors and medical professionals.

Survivors on the panel (left to right in photo) were:

- Charlie Morris, of Kent, Vietnam War veteran TBI combat survivor, retired high school teacher and public speaker.
- Samantha "Sam" Nesser, of Hilliard, TBI survivor from a basketball injury, survivor advocate before Ohio General Assembly.
- Matthew Drake, of Sylvania, Iraq War veteran, TBI combat survivor, recent participant in Dancing with the Military Stars.
- Pam Hays, of Maumee, TBI survivor from a motorcycle accident, Founder and President of The Arms Forces support group for TBI Wounded Warriors.



The panel's medical professionals were:

- Dr. Jennifer Bogner, Associate Professor and Vice-Chair for Research in the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at Ohio State.
- Dr. Mehr Siddiqui, Chief Neurologist at Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center, medical instructor, provided over 30 years of care to veterans.
- Stephanie Ramsey, of Dublin, Chair of the Ohio Brain Injury Advisory Committee and Trustee of the Brain Injury Association of Ohio, trained nurse.

The survivors were united in their positive outlooks and their desire to both help others with similar injuries while raising awareness public awareness about TBI. Medical professionals on the panel commented on the need for additional funding and research to effectively treat those who've suffered these injuries, as well as calling for passage in the Ohio Senate of House Bill 143, to more effectively treat possible occurrences of TBI in youth sports.

The event also featured some unexpected humor -- "Once you're shot in the head," said Charlie Morris, who also survived a bout with cancer, "everything else is incidental."

Video of the event is available on the Ohio Channel at:

<http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=136432>



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## Championship Golf for Free...

Every year, the Bridgestone Invitational Golf Tournament in Akron – this year's tourney runs August 1-4 – features some of golf's biggest names, and military service members are getting a chance to check out the field for nothing.



Active duty, retired and Guard and Reserve personnel and family members with ID's get in free. There's also a hospitality tent for military open August 2-5 with free food and beverages. A ceremony honoring all the men and women of the military will be held August 4 at 9 a.m.

Military can download tickets for the tournament at the site below:  
<http://www.pgatour.com/tournaments/r476/>

## Fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> ....

This year on July 4 all of America paused to celebrate the 236th year of our independence, with parades, fireworks, hot dogs and family picnics – and for Ohioans in the Columbus area who got to see the annual Red, White and Boom fireworks display, it was also a time to celebrate the 200th birthday of the city we call C-bus.

But the 4<sup>th</sup> is also a time when Americans of all backgrounds can come together, have fun and reflect on the blessings we all have - no matter what our personal circumstances - because we live in the United States of America. We may have our problems and disagreements, but – and those who have served on foreign shores know this better than anyone else – all in all, the U.S. is a great place to call home that certainly beats any number of alternatives.

And while July 4<sup>th</sup> is a time to celebrate all America, it's also a time to take just a moment to think about how we got here... and to remember the brave men and women in our military, of all generations from 1775 right up to this very minute, who have served near and far, in peace and war, to guarantee the liberty we love.

