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Leading Practice Examples: Leveraging Financial and Non-Financial Resources

There are many unique and novel approaches, programs, and practices to leverage philanthropic efforts in place across private industry that support and positively impact the employment situation of veterans.

- Like Google, many firms have identified the opportunity to expand their philanthropic efforts, based on a synergy between their core technical competencies and the needs of the veterans' community, with regard to employment. For example, Ernst & Young currently provides technical assistance to veterans participating in the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans' Families (EBV-F) program, operated by the IVMF;¹ DLA Piper (one of the largest business law firms in the world), provides up to 100 hours of pro-bono legal assistance for each program graduate); Corporations & Companies Inc., a professional incorporation service company, provides free incorporation services to EBV graduates; and BoeFly, a premier online marketplace, connecting lenders with business borrowers, provides free lending services to program grads.
- Accenture has been collaborating with the Kauffman Foundation to fund Fast Track,² working with NPower³ to help veterans start careers in IT, and has partnered with American Corporate Partners⁴ to provide mentoring services and leverage these services for program participants. The company places great value in the synergy and plans to expand these programs and partnerships to locations throughout the U.S.
- Microsoft's Elevate America Veterans Initiative⁵ helps our country's veterans and their spouses acquire the skills and resources they need to be successful in today's workplace. Through this initiative, Microsoft is convening a coalition of public, private, and non-profit organizations that are interested in contributing expertise, cash, and in-kind resources to help veterans and their spouses build their skills through resources, such as technology training and certification, job placement, career





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counseling, and other support services, such as childcare, transportation, and housing to help in their successful transition to civilian life.

- Additionally, AT&T launched two new online resources: a custom military skills translator, which enables servicemen and women to use their current Military Occupation Code or Military Occupation Specialty to find corresponding civilian career opportunities at AT&T, and the Careers4Vets program, which connects interested veterans with mentors within AT&T. These new platforms will support AT&T's ongoing veteran initiatives, including supplier diversity initiatives like Operation Hand Salute, a mentoring program that is designed to help disabled veteran businesses develop the tools and expertise to win large corporate contracts.⁶
- The Home Depot⁷ has partnered with numerous organizations with the mission to ensure that every veteran has a safe place to call home, recognizing that homelessness and unemployment are inherently linked. To support this mission, the Home Depot provides grants and volunteer resources to a number of local and national non-profit organizations, who share their passion to serve U.S. military veterans and their families. One of these initiatives includes the Repair Corps project, which is a partnership between Habitat for Humanity International and the Home Depot Foundation. Repair Corps remodels and renovates homes of U.S. military veterans by leveraging funds from the Home Depot Foundation, volunteer assistance from Team Depot (the Home Depot's associate-led volunteer force), and technical assistance from Habitat for Humanity International.
- Similar to the Home Depot and Habitat for Humanity effort, Sears Holdings, in partnership with Rebuilding Together, created the Heroes at Home⁸ program, in response to an urgent need to assist military families facing hardship. Through the program, Sears Holdings strives to improve the lives of military families across America by providing necessary repairs to homes in need. One of the efforts of the Rebuilding Together initiative is the annual Heroes at Home Wish Registry,⁹ which gives back to the men and women who serve our country and allows those who are





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deployed to send their love home for the holidays. Now in its fourth year, the Wish Registry has raised more than \$17 million in gift card donations from customers and associates and helped more than 83,000 military heroes and their families have happier holidays.

- TriWest sponsors the Military Spouse Corporate Career Network¹⁰ and the Army Wife Network's West Region Spouse Field Exercises.¹¹ The Military Spouse Corporate Career Network offers virtual and in-person meetings or webinars, helping military spouses with resumes, employment resources, training to update skill sets, and assistance in finding employment resources in their current location or the area to which they are relocating. The Army Wife Network's West Region Spouse Field Exercises are on-site workshops for Army posts and Guard/Reserve units, geared toward empowering individuals to make the right choices in their relationship, career, or personal lives.
- American Corporate Partners (ACP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting veterans in their transition from the Armed Services to the civilian workforce. With the help of business professionals nationwide, ACP offers veterans tools for long-term career development through mentoring, career counseling, and networking opportunities. In last three years, ACP has received more than \$500,000 from the following organizations: Alcoa Foundation, Aon Foundation, GE Foundation, the PepsiCo Foundation Inc., Verizon Foundation, and the Sidney E. and Amy O. Goodfriend Foundation.¹²
- JPMC has made significant and potentially enduring impacts, leveraging both financial and non-financial philanthropy:
 - Homelessness: JPMC is currently providing 1,000 homes to 1,000 wounded veterans.¹³
 - Leadership: JPMC is the founding partner in the creation of the IVMF. The institute is the first of its kind and serves as a national center in higher education, focused on the social, economic, education, and policy issues impacting veterans and their families,





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post-service. JPMC made an initial commitment of \$7.5 million over the first five years to support the launch and subsequent growth of the institute and its programs.

- **Education:** JPMC has seeded the development and launch of the GET-VET program at Syracuse University, a non-credit certificate program offered by the School of Information Studies. This program is available to both employed and unemployed, post-9/11 veterans with a minimum of a high school diploma, and is comprised of four certificates. The program is presently underwritten in its entirety by JPMC. It is free of charge to all admitted veterans and military personnel who have served on active duty post-9/11.
- **Industry Collaboration:** JPMC assumed a founding leadership role in the 100,000 Jobs Mission. A collaborative effort of more than 50 firms and growing, the initiative launched in March 2011 with the goal of hiring 100,000 transitioning service members and veterans by 2020.
- **Partnerships with veteran-support organizations** offer employers the opportunity to participate in programs and ceremonies that recognize the contributions of veterans and their families without being responsible for their organization. Employers can help collect funds from their employees; encourage them to volunteer with these organizations, and/or sponsor events or awards for veterans. For example, the Hyatt Regency partners with the local VA office to attend job fairs and do community service
- **While veterans with ongoing military responsibilities are deployed, some employers assemble care packages and letters to show their support.** When care packages and letters are sent to military members who are known to the senders, the contents can be tailored to meet their specific needs and interests. For example, Bon Secours celebrated Military Appreciation Month with Operation Care Package, collecting toiletries and personal items for active military loved ones of Bon Secours employees who were currently serving overseas. Thanks to donations from employees at Bon Secours, about 75 care packages were sent to deployed U.S. troops, of which about 35 packages went specifically to Bon Secours employees.



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- TriWest's CEO sends letters once a month to TriWest's deployed National Guard and Reserve members, and the letters include a telephone card, so that they can stay connected with their loved ones. Some companies, like the Morgan Franklin Corporation, report paying to fly military employees back home to deal with critical personal issues.
- Military families may find that they cannot easily maintain the same economic status they had before a deployment or developing a disability. As a result, they benefit from employers who provide discounted products or services to their military employees, veterans, or families. Other employers organize gift drives to supply holiday presents to children in military families. For example, KPMG's Montvale, NJ office provides more than 200 children of soldiers, returning from Iraq, with holiday gift packages containing new books and new teddy bears (assembled by their partners and employees).
- Allowing family members to participate in employer-sponsored social events (like company picnics or awards dinners), when the military employee is unable to work (because of deployment or disability), can help keep the family from becoming isolated and provide opportunities for informal support. Nelson Laboratories invites and welcomes the families of their military employees to all company events, even while employees are deployed. While one employee was deployed, Nelson Laboratories purchased and installed a play set in the employee's back yard so his children would have something to play on.
- In the publication, "Investing in the Best: How to Support the Nonprofits that Serve Veterans, Service Members and Their Families," CNAS provides guidance and baseline criteria for those interested in responsibly supporting organizations addressing the needs of military and veteran communities. The publication provides the information necessary for stakeholders involved in this space to exercise due diligence in their attempts to choose which organizations to support, and addresses how to assess those organizations that specifically support post-9/11 veterans and their families.
<http://www.cnas.org/investinginthebest>





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- The Practice Matters project represents a collective field-building effort involving more than 150 grant makers, scholars, and other experts who set out to fill the gap in knowledge about the fundamental foundation practices that lead to good grant making. Practice Matters is published online by the Foundation Center, in cooperation with Patrizi Associates at the OMG Center for Collaborative Learning.
<http://www.foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/practicematters/>
- The Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP) is the only international forum of business CEOs and chairpersons focused exclusively on corporate philanthropy. CECP's mission is to lead the business community in raising the level and quality of corporate philanthropy. It offers members essential resources, including a proprietary online benchmarking tool, networking programs, research, and opportunities for best-practice sharing.
<http://www.corporatephilanthropy.org/research/thought-leadership/research-reports.html>
- Disney announced the Heroes Work Here initiative. Over the next three years, the company has pledged to provide at least 1,000 jobs and career opportunities for returning U.S. veterans. This program will support troops and their families as they transition to civilian life, and will also launch a national public awareness campaign to encourage job opportunities for veterans. The employment offerings range from internships to leadership roles, spanning all segments of the Walt Disney Company. To recruit veterans, the corporation hosts Casting Our Veterans career expos and will participate in events showcasing jobs for returning troops. Disney also announced plans to invest in nonprofit organizations that offer training and support services for veterans. To learn more visit, <http://disneycareers.com/en/working-here/heroes-work-here/>.



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⁵ Microsoft. (2012). Microsoft Corporate Citizenship Tools: Get Job Skills: Elevate America Veterans. Retrieved from <http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/en-us/community-tools/job-skills/veterans/>.

⁶ AT&T. (2012, May). AT&T Launches 2012-2013 Operation Hand Salute. Retrieved from <http://www.att.com/gen/press-room?pid=22843&cdvn=news&newsarticleid=34441>.

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¹¹ TriWest Healthcare Alliance. (2012, April). TriWest Helps Combat Military Spouse Unemployment. Retrieved from <http://www.triwest.com/en/about-triwest/triwest-news/corp-news-archive/2012/01/triwest-helps-combat-military-spouse-unemployment/>.

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¹³ Chase. (2012). Homeownership - ChaseMilitary.com. Retrieved from <https://www.chase.com/online/military/military-homeownership.htm>.



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