

Anchors Aweigh Overcoming Employment Challenges

“We can have it all, just not all at once”

~Fergie~

Employment will be one of the many challenges you face as a military spouse. Between moves, deployments and possibly starting a family, it can be a real frustration to find a job, stay employed, get paid what you are worth or deal with the issue of underemployment. The key is to keep pushing for your dreams, stay focused on your goals, don't give up, and to take advantage of the many resources available to help you navigate the employment issues of a military spouse.

“Whether you think you can, or whether you think you can't, you're right.”

~Henry Ford~

Starting your job search:

Just One Thing – There is always something you can do to continue to move towards your dream. No matter how small, every little forward movement helps. What can you do next to help move this dream along to reality?

1. **Who are you?** Build your brand and create your “elevator” speech. (A two-three minute speech you have ready to share about who you are, what you do, or can do, and what you have to offer.) This is great preparation tool for an interview or networking.
2. **Update your resume**, and adjust it as needed for desired employment. (Use the Navy's free assistance to help you target your resume.
3. **Fill the gaps** in your resume with internships, strategic volunteering, updating certifications and licenses, taking classes as needed and staying “in the know” with your industry. (**Strategic volunteering** is volunteering with the goal of enhancing your current skills, gaining new experience, and making good connections.)
4. **Prepare for interviews** by thinking of how you would respond to questions that are commonly asked:
 - a. Tell me about yourself
 - b. What makes you the right fit for the position?
 - c. What questions do you have for us? Have questions ready for the interviewer.

5. **Use assessment tools** to help identify your interests or narrow down a broad field to something realistic. The O*Net interest profiler is made available by the US Department of Labor and can help you find out what your true interests are and how they translate into the world of work. The profiler helps you identify what kinds of careers you might want to explore. Visit <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>
6. **Participate in a mentorship programs.**
The Military Spouse Advocacy Network is a robust network of advocates, mentors, and volunteers serving our military families and improving the morale and welfare of our communities through education, empowerment, support, community and collaboration.
<https://www.militaryspouseadvocacynetwork.org>
7. **Networking** Developing a professional network is key to cultivating employment opportunities as well as mentorship relationships. Deliberate networking helps you develop a “job search” mindset and build a personal brand. It is more than passing out business cards; it’s about trusted professional relationships.
8. **Federal Employment** Family Members may be eligible for non-competitive federal employment. This allows agencies to appoint certain military spouses without competition. For more information visit <https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/shams/index.aspx>

Employment Resources

Below are a few, but not all, of the many resources available for military families members or veterans to enhance, reinvigorate, or reestablish their career pathways. These groups understand the challenges and opportunities that a Navy life-style encompasses and are designed to help meet, overcome and derive maximum benefit from your experience with Navy life.

Fleet and Family Support Programs www.ffsp.navy.mil

Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) Work and Family Life (WFL) consultants work closely together to determine the types of employment, licensure and certification assistance that would be beneficial to relocating spouses. They also facilitate Employment Fairs and are trained to help relocating spouses to use DoD, civilian and community-based initiatives to assist in employment preparation. Navy also partners with DoD and other service branches to provide web-based training directly to relocating spouses for initiatives such as:

- **My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA)** Provides financial assistance of up to \$4000 for spouses of E1-E5, W1-W2, and O1-OP2 service members. The funding must be used to obtain an Associate Degree, occupational license or a credential. <https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil>
- **Military Spouse Employment Program (MSEP)** Targets recruitment and employment solutions for spouses and companies that partners with Fortune 500 Plus companies. <https://msepjobs.militaryonesource.mil/>

MSCCN (Military Spouses Corporate Career Network)

www.msccn.org

Register Now for Employment Assistance:

http://www.pages02.net/msccn_production/Outreach

For more than ten years MSCCN has proudly served our military veterans and military spouses from all branches of service with job placement and career progression. They are military serving military!

MSCCN offers a unique program that assists each individual job seeker by helping him or her to showcase and develop a professional presence and skill sets while moving towards job placement. All services are at **no cost** to the military-affiliated job seeker.

MSCCN services are personalized to each client's employment journey and career goals. Employment Specialists assist with the development of a **targeted** resume based on assessments of one's experience and skills. Skill gaps may be addressed with online training. Once all of the tools are built, a Recruiter Connect Specialist will work with HR managers of companies looking for the skills that the job seeker has developed and "connect" the job seeker with the appropriate job.

Interviews! MSCCN qualified and job-ready applicants are connected directly to corporate and small business hiring recruiters for direct job placement.

Spouse Nation www.spousenation.org

Spouse Nation is a program powered by the Military Spouse Corporate Career Network (MSCCN). Through this program military spouses can access the following:

- A community to share ideas, resources, and solutions on employment and careers
- Participate in mentorship programs that support your career needs and goals
- Direct assistance with job placement and career progression
- Programs that support individual growth towards personal and professional goals

Spouse Nation is for all military spouses (active duty spouses, spouses of National Guard and Reserve, and spouses of veterans) from all branches of service.

SECO (Spouse Education and Career Opportunity) Military One Source

<https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/jobsearch>

The Department of Defense established the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) program to provide education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide, offering comprehensive resources and tools related to career exploration, education, training and licensing, employment readiness and career connections.

The Military OneSource Spouse Career Center offers free, comprehensive coaching services to all eligible military spouses.

Hiring our Heroes Chamber of Commerce Foundation

www.uschamberfoundation.org

Hiring Our Heroes is a nationwide initiative to help veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses find meaningful employment opportunities through nationwide hiring fairs. They are a great resource for networking in your local community.

LinkedIn (premium, 12 months free for military spouses)

<https://socialimpact.linkedin.com/programs/veterans>

The Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program (SECO) is excited to be partnering with LinkedIn's Military and Veterans Program to offer military spouses who are moving due to a permanent change of station and military spouses within six months of separation from the military cutting edge resources and tools at no cost. This partnership allows you to begin your job hunt and build networks as soon as you receive PCS orders by providing you with access to a one-year upgrade to LinkedIn Premium at no charge, including free access to LinkedIn's online library of more than 12,000 LinkedIn Learning courses.

The Military Spouse Residency Relief Act (MSRRA)

<https://militarybenefits.info/military-spouse-act-residency-relief-msrra/%23ixzz5hFDn3hsL>

This provides protection to military spouses related to residency, voting, and taxes. When a service member leaves his or her home state in accord with military orders, the service member's spouse may retain residency in his or her home state for voting and tax purposes after relocating from that state to accompany the service member. The MSRRA amends the service member Civil Relief Act to include the same privileges to a military service member's spouse.

Blue Star Families (partnered with MSCCN) <https://bluestarfam.org/>

Blue Star Families was founded by military spouses in 2009 to empower military families to thrive as they serve. They are committed to strengthening military families by connecting them with their neighbors – individuals and organizations – to create vibrant communities of mutual support. We believe we're all stronger when we take care of one another.

GIG or Remote Work

A gig economy is a free market system in which temporary positions are common and organizations contract with independent workers for short-term engagements. The trend toward a gig economy has begun. In a gig economy businesses save resources in terms of benefits, office space and training.

Instant Teams (previously known as MadSkills)

<https://www.instantteams.com/military-affinity-program>

What makes the Instant Teams' talent community so unique? Its foundation is the military community. Instant Teams serves a unique demographic of professionals from across the military-connected community whose lifestyles demand innovation, communication, and flexibility. They hire, assemble, and manage remote teams to help companies scale quickly, utilizing top talent in the tech, marketing, and administrative industries. Instant Teams is a woman-owned corporation founded by Army Spouses.

Freelancer www.freelancer.com

Freelancer.com is the world's largest freelancing and crowdsourcing marketplace by number of users and projects. We connect over 32,168,876 employers and freelancers globally from over 247 countries, regions and territories. Through our marketplace, employers can hire freelancers to do work in areas such as software development, writing, data entry and design right through to engineering, the sciences, sales and marketing, accounting and legal services.

EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (interest-free loans, grants and Scholarships)

Navy Marine Corp Relief Society (NMCRS)

The Society's Education Assistance Program offers interest-free loans and grants for undergraduate/post-secondary education at an accredited 2- or 4-year education, technical or vocational institution in the United States. This financial assistance is available for children of active duty, retired or deceased Sailors and Marines; and for spouses of active duty and retired Sailors and Marines. Learn more at <https://www.nmcrs.org/pages/education-loans-and-scholarships>

National Military Family Association (NMFA)

NMFA provides educational scholarships to military spouses. Awards can be used for a variety of educational and employment pursuits. Scholarship funds on average are \$1,000 and can be used towards degrees, certifications, licensure, and clinical supervision for mental health licensure, CEUs, business expenses and more! Any spouse eligible to hold a valid military ID is eligible. Learn more at <https://scholarships.militaryfamily.org/offers/nmfa-spouse-scholarship/>

Hope for the Warriors

The Spouse/Caregiver Scholarship Program identifies, recognizes, and rewards post-9/11 spouses/caregivers for their strength, fidelity, and resolve despite adversity. Scholarships aid in continued education at a reputable, accredited university, college, or trade school for spouses/caregivers as they assume critical roles in the financial well being of their families. They have many scholarship categories. Learn more at www.hopeforthewarriors.org/transition/military-spouse-scholarships

Wings over America

WoA is an organization whose mission is to provide college scholarships to dependent children and spouses of all US Navy personnel- officer and enlisted - active duty, retired, honorably discharged or deceased who served within Naval Air Forces. Recipients are selected on the basis of scholastic merit, community service, extra-curricular activities and character. Learn more at www.wingsoveramerica.us

Post 9/11 GI Bill

The GI Bill benefits can be transferred to a dependent family member (spouse or child). Learn more at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp

Dolphin Scholarship Foundation (for Submarine family members)

The mission of the Dolphin Scholarship Foundation is to ease the financial burden of undergraduate and vocational education for eligible members of the U.S. Submarine Force and their dependents. Dolphin Scholarship Foundation grants are available, on a competitive basis, to high school or college children/stepchildren and spouses of members or former members of the submarine force or those who have served in submarine support activities. Learn more at www.dolphinscholarship.org

Anchor Scholarship Foundation (for Surface family members)

Anchor Scholarship Foundation provides scholarships to eligible family members (children and spouses) of active duty, retired, and honorably discharged Surface Navy personnel. Learn more at www.anchorship.com

- Navy Family -

You can embrace the Navy life and still have your own life

- Balance -

Navy life, family life, personal life