

HAVE YOU HIRED A VETERAN?
Corporate * State * Federal * Non-profit * Volunteers



NATIONAL VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION COMMISSION

TOPIC 1: ECONOMY

Americans generally enjoy what they do for a living, but they are concerned about diminishing job security. So finds a new report from the Pew Research Center, in association with the Markle Foundation. The study looked at how the shifting economic landscape is reshaping work and society. The findings are based on interviews with 5,006 adults conducted in May and June and also Census data.

The 2016 presidential election has shone a spotlight on jobs and whether Americans today need a college degree to get ahead, or even just to tread water, as well as the impact of globalization and trade on American workers. Pew's study found the vast majority of Americans are happy with their jobs. Some 49 percent say they are very satisfied and another 30 percent say they are somewhat satisfied with their current employment, the study found. Only about 15 percent said they were either very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with their positions.

Workers are also holding onto their jobs longer than in the past. The share of folks who've been with their current employer for at least five years rose to 51 percent in 2014, up from 46 percent in 1996, according to Census figures Pew analyzed for the study. This is especially true among older workers. Some 76 percent were working at the same company for at least five years in 2014, up from 67 percent in 1996. They are also putting in more hours. Americans worked 46.8 weeks a year, on average, in 2015, up from 43 weeks in 1980.

Most Americans don't feel they'll lose their positions in the next year, but they are more concerned about job security. Some 63 percent say that workers have less security now than they did 20 to 30 years ago, while only 16 percent say such confidence has increased. For those who are unemployed, it's not easy to find another job, respondents said. Some 65 percent said good jobs are difficult to find in their local area. While this is a lower than the 84 percent who felt this way in 2009, at the height of the recession, it's still higher than the 55 percent who said so in mid-2007.

Additional education is crucial to holding onto jobs and advancing in the profession, workers said. Some 87 percent said it's either essential or important for them to get training and develop new skills throughout their career to keep up with changes in the workplace. The changing economy has left many Americans feeling left behind. This is particularly true of those without college degrees. The number of workers in occupations requiring average to above-average education, training and experience jumped 68 percent between 1980 and 2015, while those requiring below-average skills rose only 31 percent, according to Pew (the amount of training needed varies by occupation and is based on a Department of Labor scale. Above-average

HAVE YOU HIRED A VETERAN?
Corporate * State * Federal * Non-profit * Volunteers



preparation usually involves a four-year college degree and additional years of experience and training).

Some 72 percent of respondents said Americans bear a lot of the responsibility to secure the skills and education needed to succeed in today's economy. Some 60 percent feel the responsibility falls on K-12 schools. But only 16 percent feel that a four-year degree prepares students very well for a well-paying job in today's economy. As for threats to job security, Americans see them in many places. Eight in 10 adults felt that increased outsourcing is hurting American workers, while nearly the same share feel that having more foreign-made products sold in the U.S. has been a problem. Some 57 percent feel the increased use of contract or temporary workers is harmful, while nearly half said the decline in union membership has hurt workers.

Employment status, veteran status, and period of service	Total		Men		Women	
	SEP 2015	SEP 2016	SEP 2015	SEP 2016	SEP 2015	SEP 2016
Gulf War-era II veterans						
Unemployed	147	139	122	127	25	12
Unemployment rate	5.0	4.4	5.0	4.8	5.0	2.3

National unemployment rate is 5.0 percent (September 2016). Gulf War II veterans unemployment rate is 4.4 percent.¹ Currently, the unemployment rate for Gulf War II women veterans is 2.3 percent (down from 7.3 percent in August).

TOPIC 2: MEETINGS

On Monday October 3, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division conducted a follow-up conference call with both Southern Utah State University's (SUU) President and Aviation Department Director concerning flight school reforms they are instituting on campus. SUU has recently transitioned from contracting their flight school programs to providing them in house, which has resulted in increased savings and better education outcomes for the student-veterans attending.

On Monday October 3, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division met with Charles Tulaney, Military Relations Manager, Talent Acquisition, Lockheed Martin, regarding

¹ U.S. Department of Labor. *Economic News Release: Employment Situation Summary, November 2015.*

HAVE YOU HIRED A VETERAN?

Corporate * State * Federal * Non-profit * Volunteers



pitfalls from service members and veterans resumes. Lockheed Martin is an American global aerospace, defense, security and advanced technologies company with worldwide interests.

On Tuesday October 4, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division met with Georgetown University's Veterans Services Office to discuss best practices at private four-year institutions. Representatives from American University, Georgetown University and George Washington University will be presenting on this topic at the 2016 annual conference of the National Association of Veterans Program Administrator next week. Additionally, our staff was briefed on other topics that will be presented at the Conference.

On Tuesday October 4, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division spoke with Humboldt University's student veterans organization on best practices for creating a veteran resource center on campus. The student organization is interested in collaborating with The American Legion to create a Post on campus that could provide services and outreach to transitioning student-veterans.

On Tuesday, October 4, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division spoke with Justin Stuebgen of Corning Inc. There are 545 self-identified veterans that are currently employed with Corning that equates to roughly 20 percent of its employees. Although Corning is a relatively small company, they would like to hire at least 10 veterans per year.

On Tuesday, October 4, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division had a conference call with Orville Whitlock, Senior Consultant, Private Public Partnership (P3), to discuss the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between The American Legion and P3. P3 focuses on fostering long-term partnerships with companies, corporations, foundations, academia, and non-governmental organizations to increase Leader and Unit readiness, as well as, enhancing Individual Soldier physical, emotional, spiritual, financial and employment readiness.

On Wednesday, October 5, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division had a conference call with Hakeem Basheerud-Deen, Director of Veterans Services and Employment, Office of Personnel Management (OPM), regarding the downgrading of low-level GS positions (GS7 and below) within the VA. A majority of these positions are occupied by veterans and service-connected disabled veterans. A resolution has been drafted for review at the Fall NEC meetings.

On Wednesday, October 5, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division had a conference with Cara Lustig, Senior Associate of Events, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, regarding the Career Fair being held at the National Guard Armory in Warwick, Rhode Island. The Governor of Rhode Island, Senator Jack Reed, Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs for the State of RI, and Mayor of Warwick will be present at the event.

On Thursday, October 6, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division met with Michael Michaud, Assistant Secretary of Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), Department of Labor (DOL), to discuss their website. On January 1, 2017, DOL will assume the responsibility of assisting veterans with a centralized website - www.veterans.gov - with the termination of www.vets.gov.

HAVE YOU HIRED A VETERAN?

Corporate * State * Federal * Non-profit * Volunteers



On Friday, October 7, the National Veterans Employment & Education Division had a conference call with local community service providers in Washington, DC, that assist homeless veterans and their families. The discussion centered on the steps it takes to assist and provide the necessary treatment, housing and job training that positively effect homeless veterans ability to establish self-sufficiency and long-term success.

TOPIC 3: EMPLOYMENT

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced today the start of a new U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) jobs program that will use the national apprenticeship system to hire new employees as agricultural commodity graders, a key role in USDA's mission to protect American consumers. The new program will also serve as a way to increase jobs for U.S. veterans.

The program, piloted by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), is a registered national apprenticeship program that combines on-the-job training with theoretical and practical instruction in the classroom and online. Apprentices who complete the paid training program will meet the qualifications for a position as a USDA Agricultural Commodities Grader.

TOPIC 4: VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

On September 29, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert McDonald announced the award of \$3.4 million in grant funding offered through the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program to 16 community agencies that provide enhanced services for homeless veterans with special needs. The GPD Program promotes the development and provision of supportive housing and services to help homeless veterans to have stable residences, increase their skills and income, and achieve independence. Specifically, GPD special need grant funding assists with additional operating costs of transitional housing and services for special need groups such as women, chronically mental ill, frail elderly, terminally ill, and those with minor dependents.

"GPD Special Need Grants exemplify VA's response to the wide range of needs of subpopulations of homeless Veterans," said VA Secretary McDonald. "These 16 grants strengthen the continuum of VA services to help the most vulnerable Veterans become stably housed and achieve greater self-determination." As a result of these and other efforts, the number of U.S. veterans experiencing homelessness has been cut nearly in half since 2010. As of September 16, 2016, 29 communities and two states have confirmed and publicly announced that they have effectively ended veteran homelessness, serving as models for others across the nation.

TOPIC 5: CAREER FAIR

This week, work continued on The American Legion's upcoming hiring events to be staged in Arlington (TX), Belle Chasse (LA), Biloxi (MS), Cincinnati, Fort Jackson (SC), Fort Lee (VA), Fredericksburg (VA), Huntsville (AL), Joint Base Andrews, Kansas City, King George (VA), Lexington (KY), Lexington Park (MD), Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Montgomery (AL), Omaha (NE), Philadelphia, Pinellas Park (FL), Reston (VA), Rochester (NY), Springfield (IL), Springfield (VA) and Washington, DC.

HAVE YOU HIRED A VETERAN?
Corporate * State * Federal * Non-profit * Volunteers



The mission of The American Legion's National Veterans Employment & Education Commission is to take actions that affect the economic well-being of veterans, including issues relating to veterans' education, employment, home loans, vocational rehabilitation, homelessness and small business.

TOPIC 6: EDUCATION

The American Legion is supporting federal efforts to assist student veterans impacted by the closure of ITT Technical Institute (ITT Tech) by providing educational counseling through its service officer network. ITT Tech announced it was permanently closing all its campuses nationwide Sept. 6, citing actions by the U.S. Department of Education to ban the for-profit institution from enrolling new students using federal financial aid over concerns of financial mismanagement. This announcement directly affects more than 6,000 military veterans expected to attend fall 2016 classes using GI Bill funds.

Accredited American Legion Service Officers are specially trained to provide expert assistance, which is free to all veterans and their families. While the majority of a service officer's work involves application for VA disability benefits, these professionals also provide information, referrals and resources on education. Recently, service officers have received information to specifically counsel veterans affected by the ITT Tech closings.

"We are deeply troubled by ITT Tech's abrupt closing and the blockade it has placed in front of veterans seeking higher education," said American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt. "Since its inception, The American Legion has honored its commitment to veterans and their families in readjusting to civilian life. Today, our service officers assist veterans with understanding their benefits, solving VA's health-care maze and finding educational opportunities that match their interests. We are honored to serve as the nation's vanguard for veterans' education benefits by counseling these veterans through our service officer network."

To contact your nearest American Legion Department Service Officer for ITT Tech information or questions on VA benefits, visit www.legion.org/serviceofficers.

Joseph C. Sharpe, Jr., Director
Veterans Employment & Education Division
202.861.2700 ext. 2989
Week Ending: 10/7/16