

## **NC Military Affairs Commission Economic Development**

Brainstorming Meeting

Monday, February 03, 2014 @ 1:00 p.m.

LtGen Gary McKissock (Chair)

**Attendees:** LtGen Gary McKissock (NC Military Affairs Commission), Col Al Thoma (Chief of Staff, 2D MLG), Maj Poovey (USA National Guard), Sgt. Austin Walther (USA National Guard), Dr. Ronald K. Lingle (President of Coastal Carolina Community College), Dr. Beth Barton (MCCS Camp Lejeune), Tom Gill (MCCS Camp Lejeune), Scott Dorney (Executive Director, Military Business Center), Creswell Elmore (NC Military Affairs Commission), Joy Thrash (NC Military Affairs Commission & Military Business Center), Kimberly Lindsay (City of Jacksonville).

### **Overview/Purpose of Meeting Today:**

Economic Development Committee of NC Military Affairs Commission mandated to assist separating service members with finding jobs in NC or elsewhere. They must find best practices in other states. Also, they are advocating for a UNC Board of Governors initiative to have the NC General Assembly pass legislation waive out-of-state tuition for 1 year to allow separating service members to obtain residency. Broad request for authority at each institution to make these in-state tuition waivers

### **Introductions:**

Col Thoma: perspective from the OpFor. Provide that prospective. Soon to be retired and wants to stay here in NC.

Dr. Ron Lingle: vested interest in having our Marines obtain good jobs; the pipeline in existence of maintenance battalion.

Scott Dorney (NC MBC): Three goals, one of which is to help military and families obtain jobs in NC.

Creswell Elmore: retired civil servant and private consulting firm (New Bern/Havelock).

Joy Thrash: NC Defense Business—represent those companies who would like to hire exiting military members. Disconnect exists between those companies who want to hire military and those exiting military members.

Kimberly Lindsay: HR for City of Jacksonville; passion for giving back to military (father Navy Commander); focus on the employers because they do not know the value of the veteran as an employee. Worked directly with Paul Galate and Governor of Virginia to create V3: Virginia Values Vets (167 certified employers and 600 companies trained).

Austin Walther: Education and Employment Center (Raleigh) for National Guard. How to get employers in NC invigorated to hire veterans.

Frank Ploovey: Education and Employment Center Director. Veterans call in or visit website and they walk them through educational processes, resume writing, interview techniques—and work with employers to make hiring connections. General Lusk is on board.

Tom Gill: Retired from Air Force in 1998; Executive in Health Care system and can provide insight into programs to hire veterans (junior officers as well as E2s to O6). This experience of placing jobs and working with LtCol now.

### **Where do we start with this process?**

LCpl needs a job. Do we start with the employers? How is the state of NC helping you connect with exiting military? National Job Fair here aboard Camp Lejeune last week showcased employers with jobs but those employers advertise differently and NC isn't helping them connect.

Col Thoma—wants to stay in NC because he likes NC. Why? location on the East Coast, weather, fishing/activities, son in Raleigh. He is two years from retirement and knows about transition services but young Marines are not aware of the services. Young Marines utilize social media.

Comments regarding Col Thoma's statements:

Scott Dorney—young Marines likely don't have choice of where but rather WHERE the job is.

Gary McKissock—BRANDING North Carolina is important. Do young service members know of the services available through the state of NC? (Austin Walther) soldiers don't know about NC Back to Work program at Community Colleges; website needed to overview all of these services that are available.

(Tom Gill) Branding is important—service members stationed in NC don't know the value of NC.

(Ron Lingle) find the employers in NC who are hiring now and place our current military in those jobs.

Find the employers who need particular MOS training and conduct job placement.

How does the young service member find out about a job in NC?

Employers w/ jobs ----- exiting service members how do we connect these?

(Joy Thrash) There is so much variance—likely not one answer for all of this. No one accountable for connecting the employers with the possible employees.

Gary McKissock—Base Paper ("Globe")—advertising TRS services and advertising "testimonials" of success.

Advertising the services.

Kimberly Lindsay—V3 focused on three things: 1) connecting the dots (silos); 2) training and development (how to write a resume/how to interview); 3) employer awareness. At first, focused on creating curriculum for interviewing skills/resume writing, etc. Moved to connecting the dots/silos of who in the state was doing what. Realized the focus needed to be on employer awareness. The employers are not opening the doors to veterans. Incentivize or convince them for at least a portion of their hiring. COOs believe they cannot hire good people. Hero to Hired.jobs is a good tool and it should be used.

Austin Walthers—working with the employers is the key. Allied Barton is our go-to company and National Guard places many Guardsmen there within a few days.

[WE/TRS needs to develop relationships with hiring managers and we need to make connections with Poovey/Walthers/Dorney's/Thrash's offices].

Scott Dorney: Has connections with employers who receive jobs and send those positions to TAP offices on installations. He does not hear back about what happens after he sends the job to us BECAUSE WE DO NOT HAVE A SYSTEM, nor the staff, to connect the military with the jobs.

Creswell Elmore: as a hiring manager, Creswell noticed the biggest weakness was in resume writing. There is a tremendous supply of contractors looking for qualified veterans for these jobs. As a Commission, we could encourage businesses to locate to North Carolina.

Gary McKissock: is there a demand for government contractors to hire separating military? Yes. It does come down to relationships—and businesses are going to hire who they want to hire.

What is the role of the Department of Commerce? NC Jobs Plan is published and military is not mentioned in it anywhere. Unless someone is accountable for ensuring military are placed in NC jobs.

All American Defense Corridor project—may be a good reference for Department of Commerce and our goal to bring employers to this area.

**Summary of Today's Meeting:**

- People are talking about employers and educating them
- Jobs available
- State Chamber of Commerce/local Chambers need to play a bigger role
- State of NC needs to play a bigger role—state (Commerce and Chamber) needs to get it—that military plays a huge role in Commerce and Economic Development

Getting veterans work—to State Dept of Commerce: what are you doing to hire vets?  
Do we have the jobs in NC?

Kimberly Lindsay: \$350,000 donated to V3 by one large company (Phillip Morris); \$50,000 donated by Walmart; Capital One donated training facilities;

Need Baseline data: how many exiting service members on all installations are interested in staying in NC? How many possible service members a job in NC? 15% of all exiting service members?

Need a Hiring Manager Campaign.

Joy Thrash: it comes down to relationships and who in NC is representing that relationship.

**Next Step:** Meet with the Department of Commerce and voice concerns of military not represented. Perhaps with State Chamber too. Who should be at the table for the next meeting?

- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Commerce: Public/Private Ventures  
Employment Security Commission (previous name)
- Workforce Solutions

**Two Overall Take Aways:**

- Focus on Employers (educating hiring managers)
- Divide this up into bitable pieces

PIPELINE NC—job portal for NC jobs.

NOTE: State and Local Government does have, or has not adopted, Veterans Hiring Preferences. This needs to be an issue that the Commission or Government adopts.

Governor's "I Hire Military" and "StayNC"

The meeting concluded at 3:00 p.m.

