Welcome to the MVO Task Force Connect!

I trust you had a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family and friends. This is such an important time of the year as we all come together to celebrate all that we are thankful for. But it goes so much more beyond our own family and friends, doesn’t it? To be thankful for what we have the opportunity to do each and every day in support of military families within our own communities and beyond.

Thankfully we have the chance to touch lives and help others. I know I’m thankful for that. I’m also thankful for this MVO Task Force – and the ability to bring together 60 organizations with the common goal of supporting our military community and finding ways to continue working as a collaborative to enhance lives around us.

Earlier this year we conducted a survey. At the time the MVO TF consisted of 51 members of which 28 members took part. The goal was to gather as much input from the Task Force on your thoughts of how to expand our partnership and assist in developing a strategic plan to discover better ways for outreach and collaboration between all the MVO TF members.

So, What's next? Based on the survey results let’s start working on joint educational webinars. We can brainstorm and develop creative ideas to reach more within our military community by educating them on not just their mission but how to reach veteran business owners. Together, we can help them better understand the benefits of certification to support business growth.

Let’s put our heads together and help our veterans succeed on every level. Who’s in?

Together we can achieve more for America’s Heroes.

Happy Holidays!
Kathryn M. Poynton, LTC (ret)
Director, NVBDC’s MVO Task Force
NVBDC Board Member
MVO Task Force Member Survey 2023

Survey Background
Survey was sent to 51 TF members with 28 Task Force members completing the survey.
The survey was distributed 13 Dec 22 with a suspension of 29 Dec 22. The suspension date was extended to 31 Jan 23.
Survey contained 20 questions:
• 11 were administrative in nature
• 9 were related to TF members input about taking the MVO TF to the next level

What are your organization/entities biggest needs/challenges? (23 responses out of 28 possible responses)
• 9 Responses referenced Funding/Fundraising as the biggest challenge

What can NVBDC and the MVO Task Force do for you? (25 responses out of 28 possible responses)
Top responses:
• Continued support and promotion of their organization/events
• Partner in training opportunities.

What can you do for the NVBDC, the MVO task force and/or other MVO Task Force Members? (25 responses out of 28 possible responses)
Various responses included:
• Continue to Promote NVBDC's Mission
• Host Joint Webinars
• Conduct Training
• Create Veteran Support Networks

Why did you join the MVO Task Force? (Top Responses)
Support VOBs 46.7%
Network 20.0%
Be part of a larger Veteran community 33.3%

Would you be interested in attending virtual monthly get togethers with other MVO Task Force Members to network and support each other’s missions/visions?
YES 89.3%
NO 10.7%

Would you be interested in hosting NVBDC on a joint webinar to present “Value of Certification” or similar topics like this to your Veteran Business Owners/Entrepreneurs within your network?
YES 75.0%
NO 17.9%
No Answer 7.1%

Do you know the percentage of Veterans within your organization that are business owners/entrepreneurs?
YES 46.4%
NO 28.6%
No Answer 25.0%
The recently released 2022 Economic Impact Report by the Billion Dollar Roundtable (BDR) indicates a $6.7 billion impact on service-disabled and veteran-owned businesses (SD/VOBs). The BDR is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to drive supplier diversity excellence through best practice sharing and thought leadership. It recognizes corporations that have spent over a $1 billion with diverse suppliers per year.

The BDR currently represents 39 major corporation partners that spend over $1 billion per year with women, minority, service disabled, veteran owned, disabled and LGBTQ businesses. Due to the support of many of their members and the advocacy of NVBDC, BDR members have incorporated the NVBDC certification for its diversity spend. These corporations have a strong interest in the veteran owned business community and have made the NVBDC certification the only acceptable SD/VOB certification for Primes, as well as their Tier I and Tier II suppliers.

In recent years, there has been a growing focus on supporting businesses owned by service-disabled and veteran-owned businesses known as SD/VOBs. As a result of this partnership, BDR members have spent over $3.3 billion with NVBDC certified SD/VOBs in 2022 as well as:

- $2 billion in payroll.
- $3.7 billion added value to the GDP.
- 44,498 jobs.
- A $6.7 billion total impact on service-disabled and veteran-owned businesses.

In 2012 NVBDC created the rationale for veteran-owned businesses to be included in corporate supplier diversity programs. The presentation included data on economic disadvantages, educational disparity, and career hindrances. NVBDC was established in 2013 to address the growing need to identify and certify both service-disabled and veteran-owned businesses in the commercial marketplace.

Today NVBDC administers a rigorous certification process designed to withstand the scrutiny of governmental and corporate entities seeking to utilize certified SD/VOBs. NVBDC adopted these rigorous standards to align with supplier diversity industry best practices.

To maintain consistency among the 39 members of the BDR, diverse suppliers must be certified by one of these third-party certification agencies: NVBDC; National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC); The Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC); Disability:IN; and National Gay Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC).

For BDR purposes, certified means that U.S. suppliers have been confirmed by a third-party certification agency as being at least 51 percent owned, operated, and controlled by one of the five diversity certification organizations above. This is a significant milestone, as it not only highlights the growing importance of supporting diverse businesses but also demonstrates the impact that NVBDC Certified SD/VOBs are having on the lives of our veterans, their families and their communities.

Many NVBDC/BDR members, including companies such as Walmart, Johnson & Johnson, General Motors, Apple, Google, Meta Supplier Diversity, and Amazon have made it a priority to work with NVBDC certified SD/VOBs. They recognize the unique value that these diverse businesses bring to the table, including their agility, innovation, and commitment to quality.

By working with NVBDC certified SD/VOBs, members of the BDR not only supporting a diverse supplier base but also benefiting from the expertise and innovation that these businesses bring to the table. It’s a win-win situation for everyone involved, as SD/VOBs are able to grow and thrive, while corporations are able to tap into new sources of innovation and creativity.

The BDR’s recognition of the impact of NVBDC certified SD/VOBs is a testament to the growing importance of diversity and inclusion in the business world. By supporting these businesses, companies are not only doing the right thing but also benefiting from the unique value that these businesses bring to the table.
The National Native American Supplier Council (NNASC) is quickly making a name for itself as the only certifying body for tribally and indigenous owned businesses. NNASC certifies businesses that are Native owned and controlled in three distinct categories: individual, tribal, and tribal economic development corporation. The council was first established in early 2023 and already has members with more tribes expected to join in the coming months.

Executive Director Jason Palmer and his team estimate that they have already spoken to more than 100 tribes around the U.S. about potential membership. Palmer says there are 574 federally recognized tribes in the country. He plans to eventually connect with every one of those tribes about the opportunities the NNASC provides.

The council’s mission is to empower its certified businesses by providing opportunities to connect, collaborate, and thrive. By serving as the certifying body for Native American owned businesses, the NNASC has a similar mission to the NVBDC, and plans to use some of the same successful strategies to build its brand.

Support for the council in less than a year has been “overwhelming” according to Palmer. He says that tribes and their citizens have had an issue promoting and getting recognition as a minority business enterprise for their Native American owned businesses for many years, and that he and a group of other tribal leaders from Michigan decided to act. Palmer is a member of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, better known as the Gun Lake Tribe in Michigan. The council has built a nationwide platform to help support members and the council’s own controlled growth strategy.

“One message portrayed by the council is the importance of diversifying in various types of businesses, and where feasible, away from a gaming-focused approach, Palmer says. The Gun Lake Tribe for example has invested in several properties in Michigan cities like Detroit and Grand Rapids, and in farther away places like Texas. Part of Palmer’s role is to educate others on the fact that Native American tribes are considered their own sovereign nations, giving them increased economic and social flexibility.

NVBDC and the MVO Task Force is a perfect fit for NNASC in part because Native Americans have a deep respect for veterans. Palmer says that historically Native Americans have served in branches of the U.S. Military at the highest per-capita involvement of any population.

“We (founded) the council because there was a long-term problem that required a resolution,” Palmer says. NNASC has pro-actively spoken with organizations that represent collectives of Tribes, such as the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes and United Tribes of Michigan. “There have been no issues or red flags raised that would prevent us from growing.”

Learn more by visiting nnasc.org.
The Michigan Veterans Entrepreneurial Lab (MVE-Lab) is housed in Grand Rapids, Mich., on the campus of Grand Valley State University. It provides a free, 10-week cohort educational and training program that empowers veterans to meet their dream of starting a business or expanding an existing veteran-owned business.

The cohort is open to veterans along with their spouses and dependents who are Michigan residents, according to Lead Instructor and Ambassador Michael Hyacintha. The 10-week program includes a pitch competition that awards a combined $22,000 to students in each class, including a $10,000 first prize.

The MVE-Lab lab first started in 2018 and since has graduated more than 160 veterans. The course is specifically designed to address some of the most common questions new and aspiring entrepreneurs have such as identifying customers, lending options, sales and marketing techniques, determining price points for products and services and more. Veterans are also given information to help them decide what type of legal business entity they should form, such as a C-Corp, S-Corp, LLC or sole proprietorship.

“Veterans make for really good entrepreneurs because of their discipline, organizational and planning skills,” said Hyacintha. He added that they are often older when they leave the military than many entrepreneurs, and are more likely to have older children, aging parents and/or spouses, and even disabilities as a result of their military service.

The training is held in a classroom-style setting at Grand Valley State or in other cities around Michigan. The program has been able to expand with the help of the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund and other local and statewide donors, with cohorts having been hosted in such cities as Battle Creek, Detroit, and Muskegon. The in-person approach works best because Hyacintha says the goal is for the MVE-Lab to go where veterans are to make it easy for their busy schedules.

“It’s an honor for us to lead veterans in their journey toward entrepreneurial success,” Hyacintha said. “We as a society need to come together to help veterans find their purpose and live out their dreams.”

Hyacintha is one of the Grand Rapids-based facilitators with his own success story as a small business owner. All instructors are both veterans and experienced entrepreneurs. To learn more about education, mentoring and training with the MVE-Lab by visiting www.gvsu.edu/mve.

Students at a recent MVE Lab cohort learn more about entrepreneurship topics and trends.
Featured Task Force Member

It's A Military Life

It’s A Military Life (IML) joined the Task Force as a member in 2021. IML began in June 2020 by Christina Etchberger, who is an Army spouse and mother living in South Korea. It began as a heavily read lifestyle blog and through vast popularity evolved into a growing nonprofit organization. IML is an official 501c3 focused on supporting military families and veterans. Our mission is to provide programs and services that enhance the quality of life for those who have served our country.

Christina started It’s A Military Life as a way to support the unique needs of military families and veterans – something she had experienced first-hand. We all know that women and men make extensive sacrifices when they serve. Some of those sacrifices are shared by family members as well. The nonprofit’s mission is to provide programs and services that enhance the quality of life for those who have served our country and their family members.

IML offers three programs to help meet the unique needs of these individuals. Our Veteran Pen Pal Project connects veterans with pen pals to offer companionship. It’s A Military Child Life provides resources and support for military children and their families. It’s A Military Connection offers networking and career resources for military spouses and veterans.

Veteran Pen Pal Project

There’s nothing quite like a handwritten letter as a way to advocate for mental health within the military community. VPPP started as a way to bring relationships to veterans in care facilities, and has grown to include military spouses and active-duty service members. It continues with those goals today. One of the best ways to communicate with these heroes is through old-fashioned letters that thank these veterans for their commitment to freedom, as well as promote the sharing of our stories and the building of friendships across generations.

It’s A Military Child Life

This program provides activities that support significant advocacy for military children, teens, and families. It’s a Military Child Life provides resources for homeschooling, learning activities, giveaways, activities for kids and teens, literary recommendations, and so much more! The organization considers it part of its mission to address the needs of military children and teens by providing valuable resources; and fostering meaningful social connection through programs that support the experiences of military children and teens everywhere. By doing this, the organization cheers them on during their unique journey to support a happy present and successful future filled with opportunities and excitement.

It’s A Military Connection

The final of the three main programs is the Military Connection. This is all about supporting veterans as they venture back into the workforce through the organization’s career readiness cohort. Throughout this cohort experience, veterans will have more professional skills, hands-on experiences, and a supportive network that will give them a voice as a member of the military community. These efforts help veterans returning to civilian life feel confident with resume development, networking, modern workplace technology, and other important career professional development skills.

It’s a Military Life Corporation is a registered 501c3 non-profit organization. Learn more by visiting www.itsamilitarylife.org. Those interested can also donate to the organization or leave a review.
Michigan Women Veterans Empowerment (MWVE) is a faith-based, non-profit organization created by Ret. Sgt. Stephanie Shannon, an honorably discharged disabled U.S. Army veteran who served her county for eight years including in the 1990-1991 Desert Storm/Desert Shield Persian Gulf War. The MWVE’s mission is to empower all veterans, service members, military family members and children in the eight dimensions of wellness (emotional, financial, environmental, intellectual, occupational, physical, social and spiritual) through education, trainings, programs, events, mentorships, advocacy and supportive resources in Michigan.

As founder and CEO, Shannon experienced sexual and mental trauma while serving the U.S. Army, and found there were few, if any resources for women dealing with such challenges. Combined with chemical and other physical exposures that women and men were subject to in the Middle East, Shannon is a former homeless service-connected disabled US Army veteran who has since thrived as an author, public speaker and veteran leader.

Shannon brings more than 30 years of experience combined in the fields of business, social service and social work, community development, leadership, ministry, collaborations, entrepreneurship, youth development programs, women veteran’s empowerment, event planning and consulting. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Grand Valley State University and is the author of the #1 Amazon Best Seller “Battling The Storm Within” and a second book, “Our Voices United”.

Learn more about MWVE: www.empowermiwomenvets.com, MIWVEC@yahoo.com or 810-373-5744.

“There really wasn’t the support I needed and others like me struggled as well to obtain it. My voice is my superpower and I use it to change my life and to speak for others who can’t speak for themselves.”

MWVE empowers these veterans and family members through a variety of programs, workshops, trainings, retreats and other educational events designed to support wellness. Shannon is committed to doing so through tailor-made programs that make a positive difference.

Examples include:

- Dirt Therapy: Veterans and Youth Agriculture and Agribusiness Programs – includes gardening and other yard work projects designed to heal the soul along with financial literacy and entrepreneurship training for youth
- Youth Entrepreneurship Programs
- Financial Literacy Education programs
- Annual and quarterly training events
- Our Voices United: Women Veteran Anthology Books and Book Writing Workshops

Shannon says she has personally found a new joy in life by participating in and leading many of these programs. Programs like Dirt Therapy allowed her to experience a sense of joy and nature that had been missing in her life. She hopes to provide a similar sense of joy to other veterans through these and other MWVE programs. Another way she does this is by hosting annual empowerment conferences for veterans and their families.

Additionally, Shannon hopes to reinstate and expand a Drill Team Leadership Program in the metro Detroit area and West Michigan. Designed for teens, this is a leadership program that builds character development in young men and women through step and dance drills. She has successfully run this program in cities throughout Michigan in the past.
Mannarino served in New York Army National Guard and for several years worked with the military in both public affairs and purchasing. As a purchasing specialist, she helped to start Patriot Hills in the years following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks as a way to help families deal with the stress of having a veteran dedicated to serving their country. This can be an overwhelming burden that the organization is hoping to help solve.

Patriot Hills is funded by military and veteran causes and corporate and private donations.

While educational information and resources are a big part of what makes Patriot Hills unique, it also hosts events designed to support family fun. One such event planned is a Cinco De Mayo celebration planned May 5, 2024, in Rotterdam Elks Lodge where a number of fun events will be held for veterans and their families like pool, darts, cornhole toss and more.

In between those fun events, Patriot Hills will continue to help veterans find healthcare options to combat wartime illnesses and find ways to seamlessly integrate into civilian life.

“If we don’t educate civilians and veterans both on the resources that are available to them, then shame on US,” Mannarino says.

Members of the Saratoga County Sheriff’s Cadets (black uniforms) and the 109th Air National Guard, Scotia, New York. support Patriot Hills’ day by volunteering earlier this year.
Upcoming Events & Happenings*

*Listed are known upcoming events at time of publication. Further details are available at our [website](https://veteran.events/calendar/)

December 2023

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Host(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1-31</td>
<td>Online calendar - <a href="https://veteran.events/calendar/">https://veteran.events/calendar/</a></td>
<td>Women Veterans Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 1-31</td>
<td>Support Women Veteran Owned Businesses and Shop Our 2023 Holiday Gift Guide</td>
<td>Women Veterans Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Three Planets&quot; written by Chris Clayton (Army Veteran)</td>
<td>Tactical 16 Publishing - <a href="https://t16books.com/">https://t16books.com/</a></td>
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<td>December 2</td>
<td>Alumni Bus Trip to NYC</td>
<td>Central Penn College (Meritorious)</td>
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<td>December 5</td>
<td>National Government Agency Virtual Career Fair</td>
<td>RecruitMilitary</td>
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<td>Those Other Logistics Jobs! Webinar</td>
<td>Troops2Logistics</td>
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<td>December 6</td>
<td>Hiring Event in San Diego, CA</td>
<td>RecruitMilitary</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Hiring Event in Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>RecruitMilitary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DMV Women Veterans Meetup (Washington DC, Maryland, Virginia)</td>
<td>Women Veterans Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MC Gowan for “Not on My Watch” written by MC Gowan (Navy Veteran)</td>
<td>Tactical 16 Publishing - <a href="https://t16books.com/">https://t16books.com/</a></td>
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<td>December 12</td>
<td>Fertility &amp; Infertility Coaching/Consulting ; An introduction to BrookHaven Coaching</td>
<td>DSDC/DeltaPoint Partners LLC / Deer Ridge Group LLC</td>
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<td>December 12</td>
<td>Central Region Virtual Career Fair for Veterans</td>
<td>RecruitMilitary</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 30</td>
<td>Food Giveaway</td>
<td>MI Women Veteran Empowerment</td>
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Upcoming Events & Happenings*

*Listed are known upcoming events at time of publication. Further details are available at our [website](#).

### 2024

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Host</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Cinco De Mayo Celebration to support Military Families</td>
<td>Patriot Hills of New York</td>
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<td>June 1</td>
<td>MMAA National Gala</td>
<td>Modern Military Association of America</td>
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<td>June 23</td>
<td>Annual Heritage Military Banquet &amp; Awards Ceremony</td>
<td>The Montford Point Marines of America</td>
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<td>January 10</td>
<td>Creating a Healthier Life for the Military Community</td>
<td>It’s a Military Life</td>
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<td>January 26</td>
<td>Veterans, Guns &amp; Cigars at Shot Show 2024</td>
<td>Meritorious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Women Veterans Engage Conference</td>
<td>Women Veterans Alliance</td>
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</tbody>
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# Hiring Event Schedule 2024

## By Month

### January
- 18 Hampton, VA
- 18 Raleigh, NC
- 18 Tampa, FL
- 23 Western Region
- 25 San Antonio, TX

### February
- 1 Dallas, TX
- 1 Fort Liberty, NC
- 6 Transitioning Army & Spouse
- 8 Atlanta, GA
- 13 Eastern Region
- 15 Camp Pendleton, CA
- 15 Scott AFB Area, IL
- 22 Phoenix, AZ
- 29 Fort Riley, KS

### March
- 6 San Diego, CA
- 7 Houston, TX
- 14 Fort Bliss, TX
- 14 Greater Washington DC Area
- 19 National
- 28 Jacksonville, FL
- 28 Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA
- 28 Pittsburgh, PA

### April
- 3 Fort Moore, GA
- 4 Boston, MA
- 11 Charlotte, NC
- 11 Dallas, TX
- 18 Chicago, IL
- 18 Naval Station Norfolk, VA
- 23 Central Region
- 25 Denver, CO
- 25 Joint Base San Antonio, TX

### May
- 1 Fort Cavazos Area, TX
- 7 Military Spouse
- 9 Fort Liberty, NC
- 16 Baltimore, MD
- 16 Wright Patterson AFB Area, OH
- 21 National
- 23 Naval Base Kitsap Area, WA
- 30 Eglin AFB/Hurlburt Field Area, FL
- 30 Phoenix, AZ

### June
- 4 National Government Agency
- 6 Atlanta, GA
- 6 Houston, TX
- 13 Hampton, VA
- 13 St. Louis, MO
- 18 Eastern Region
- 27 Fort Carson, CO
- 27 Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA
- 27 Greater Washington DC Area

### July
- 9 Western Region
- 10 Fort Moore, GA
- 11 Tampa, FL
- 18 Kansas City, MO
- 18 Raleigh, NC
- 25 Naval Station Norfolk, VA
- 25 San Antonio, TX
- 30 Central Region

### August
- 1 Denver, CO
- 1 Philadelphia, PA
- 6 Transitioning Army & Spouse
- 8 Hill AFB Area, UT
- 15 Camp Pendleton, CA
- 15 Fort Liberty, NC
- 22 Dallas, TX
- 27 National
- 29 Indianapolis, IN

### September
- 5 Charlotte, NC
- 5 Greater Seattle, WA
- 12 Atlanta, GA
- 12 Boston, MA
- 26 Fort Cavazos, TX
- 19 Nashville, TN
- 19 Phoenix, AZ
- 26 Fort Bliss, TX
- 26 Greater Cincinnati Area, OH

### October
- 1 Eastern Region
- 9 San Diego, CA
- 10 Colorado Springs, CO
- 10 Tampa, FL
- 17 Chicago, IL
- 17 Greater Washington DC Area
- 17 Joint Base Lewis McChord, WA
- 22 Western Region
- 23 Fort Moore, GA
- 24 Joint Base San Antonio, TX
- 31 Naval Base Kitsap Area, WA
- 31 Naval Station Norfolk, VA

### November
- 7 Wright Patterson AFB Area, OH
- 14 Fort Liberty, NC
- 14 Jacksonville, FL
- 19 National Government Agency
- 21 Dallas, TX
- 21 Eglin AFB / Hurlburt Field Area, FL
- 26 National

### December
- 5 Camp Pendleton, CA
- 5 Atlanta, GA
- 5 Houston, TX
- 10 Central Region
- 12 Orlando, FL

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## Hiring Event Stats

- **2,800+** exhibitors attended
- **37,000+** veterans and military spouse accessible registrants
- **6,700+** job offers expected

Data based on in-person and virtual hiring events from Jan-Jun 2023.

1.800.226.0841  |  RecruitMilitary.com/employers

888-CERTIFIED  |  NVBDC.ORG