



# National Education and Credentialing Summit Report

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, 2022, the American Legion Veterans Employment and Education Commission convened a National Education and Credentialing Summit in Milwaukee, Wis., in conjunction with the Legion's 103rd National Convention. The summit was designed to move the needle forward to identify and address unique issues related to education, credentialing and employment faced by military-connected individuals, including service members, veterans, spouses and dependents. A diverse array of stakeholders came together for the event, including representatives from military, government, industry, organized labor, academia and others immersed in issues surrounding non-academic post-secondary credentials. A major focus of the summit centered around elucidating the problems and potential solutions surrounding some of our nation's most pressing labor shortages, particularly within the trucking industry and supply chain.



For more than 20 years, The American Legion has been an active and vocal advocate of civilian credentialing for service members. The Legion has sponsored research, hosted summits and raised awareness about the importance of facilitating credentialing for this population. Our people in uniform receive outstanding technical training and work experience in their military occupations but often have difficulty translating those skills as they transition to the civilian workforce. Holding a civilian credential that attests to an individual veteran's level of skill and competence helps civilian employers understand how military training and experience apply to the position for which they are hiring.

The summit consisted of plenary and breakout sessions and featured numerous notable speakers from government and industry with sessions addressing five broad areas. These five areas are described briefly below followed by a summary of the opportunities for action that resulted from the extraordinarily successful two-day event.

## OVERVIEW OF SUMMIT TOPICS

**Task Force Movement on Trucking.** A major focus of the summit was the Task Force Movement (TFM) on Trucking, which was undertaken in response to the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan launched at the White House on April 4, 2022. The TFM on Trucking is a grassroots movement designed to alleviate labor shortages in trucking and bring together public and private entities to identify ways to facilitate the movement of military-trained truck drivers into civilian trucking jobs. The movement centers on convening stakeholders to participate in four growth groups to identify best practices and opportunities to help highly trained, transitioning service members and veterans attain well-paying, fulfilling jobs within the trucking industry:

1. Veteran service organizations
2. Academic/vocational institutions
3. Industry
4. Government

While the initial emphasis of the TFM was on trucking, at the close of the summit, it was announced that the TFM will be expanding to also concentrate on facilitating training and placement of service members and veterans in cybersecurity.

**Department of Defense Career Readiness Programs.** The Department of Defense, Force Education and Training offers several programs designed to enhance military readiness while also promoting military recruiting, professional development, retention, and transition. During the summit, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, Shawn Skelly, spoke about DoD initiatives that support the dual and

complementary goals of promoting military readiness and setting service members up for post-service success. The summit objectives of ensuring recognition of military training and experience toward education, credential and employment goals directly align with the DoD's readiness goals. The stories that veterans and their family members tell about their experience in uniform serving their country and their success post-transition have a tremendous impact on recruiting an all-volunteer force and on the success of the Department of Defense and its mission on behalf of the United States.

Educating and training the force to be ready to perform its mission is a critical component of Skelly's portfolio, and that includes promoting credentialing of service members and implementation of the DoD SkillBridge program that allows service members to participate in industry training, apprenticeships or internships during their last 180 days of service. These programs are also an integral part of DoD's support for the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan and the TFM on Trucking, and they were discussed throughout the summit by Skelly and her colleagues. The summit included breakout sessions highlighting DoD's SkillBridge and Credentialing Programs and a powerful tool called MilGears, designed to help service members and veterans identify career options in-service and post-service.

**Education and Employment Initiatives.** The idea that many military veterans are not regarded as "college material" and will not succeed in college has been argued since the establishment of the GI Bill in 1944. However, the notion of veterans being incapable of achieving academic standards quickly dissipated as student veterans not only met, but often exceeded, expectations. Similarly, the current generation of transitioning veterans is highly motivated to excel in college and view a post-secondary certificate or degree as essential to their future. The question then becomes whether institutions, employers and credentialing programs are prepared to support these transitioning veterans. The summit included several sessions designed to address the unique challenges that military-connected students face in pursuing their educational and civilian career goals.

**Industry-Specific Initiatives.** A consistent theme throughout the summit was the importance of public-private partnerships to alleviate barriers and facilitate the education, credentialing, and post-service employment of service members and veterans. Several summit sessions focused on this theme, including sessions on aviation, health care, and ports and supply chain.

**Innovations in Credentialing.** The Legion's research and convenings around promoting the education, credentialing and employment of service members and veterans over the past 20 years have been instrumental in breaking down barriers and facilitating opportunities in these areas. Several of the 2022 summit sessions furthered the dialogue about innovative solutions to promote credentialing of service members and veterans and presented opportunities for action for stakeholders. Innovations that were highlighted include:

1. Innovations in Credit for Prior Learning for Service Members and Veterans
2. Development of a New Work-based Learning Standard
3. Developing a National Learning and Employment Record Ecosystem

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

The presentations and discussions at The American Legion National Education and Credentialing Summit point to numerous opportunities for action to further facilitate education, credentialing and employment of service members and veterans. The table below captures these opportunities by stakeholder group in three broad areas:

1. Trucking Specific
2. Workforce Development and Credentialing
3. Educational and Vocational

| Opportunities for Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Stakeholder Group |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Government        | Military | Industry | Academia/<br>Vocational<br>Training Providers | Veteran Service<br>Organizations | Congress |
| <b>Trucking-Specific Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Dispel misconceptions about truck-driving jobs and raise awareness of the fact that these jobs are: (1) varied in type with many opportunities that are not just long-haul; (2) high-paying with excellent benefits, (3) held by a diverse range of people with various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.   | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Raise awareness among service members and veterans of the availability of the Military Skills Test Waiver and Military Knowledge Test Waiver Program, which expedite the ability of eligible military truck drivers to attain Commercial Drivers Licenses by providing credit for military training and experience. | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Pursue opportunities through the Department of Transportation's (DoT) Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training Grant Program to receive funding to assist veterans and military spouses to receive CMV training.                                                                                     | X                 |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| Raise awareness of DoT's Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program that allows certain 18-19- and 20-year old drivers to operate commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce.                                                                                                                                   | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Become familiar with the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan and get involved with the Task Force Movement for Trucking.                                                                                                                                                                                              | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| <b>Workforce Development/Credentialing Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Establish apprenticeship programs and take advantage of resources, such as the Department of Labor's Apprenticeship.gov, which is a one-stop source to connect career seekers, employers, and education partners with apprenticeship resources.                                                                     | X                 |          | X        | X                                             |                                  |          |
| Become a DoD SkillBridge Program partner and sponsor internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities to tap into the expertise of transitioning service members and recruit them.                                                                                                                                   | X                 |          | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Encourage service members and veterans to attain occupational credentials (for service members – promote early in the military life cycle).                                                                                                                                                                         |                   | X        |          | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Utilize resources, such as DoD's Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) and MilGears (Powered by COOL) to see how military training and experience aligns with civilian jobs and academic and non-academic credentials.                                                                                         | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |

| Opportunities for Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Stakeholder Group |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Government        | Military | Industry | Academia/<br>Vocational<br>Training Providers | Veteran Service<br>Organizations | Congress |
| Become familiar with the White House Executive Order on Improving the Nation’s Cybersecurity and become involved with the Task Force Movement on Cybersecurity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Become involved with the discussion surrounding developing a work-based learning credential standard that would improve the transparency behind skills attained through these programs and help ensure their quality.                                                                                                                                                                                                       | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Federal and state governments should adopt skills-based hiring practices and explore how to incentivize other employers to model these practices.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| Human Resources directors should develop a sound understanding of Learning and Employment Records (LERs) and the positive impact that these can bring to an organization as it shifts focus from degrees that individuals have earned to what individuals know and can do. This can be accomplished by undertaking feasibility studies, needs analyses, and pilot projects.                                                 | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| <b>Educational/Vocational Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Congress should work to establish a comprehensive data framework for risk-based surveys that protects the privacy of veterans’ academic records while providing lawmakers and state approving agencies with the critical information needed to successfully operate the risk-based survey framework. (Reference: Lessons from a Risk-Based Oversight Model Designed to Protect Students and Taxpayers)                      |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| Congress should work to raise the monthly housing allowance stipend for veterans enrolled in distance learning full-time to 100% of the BAH national average so that veterans utilizing their GI Bill for online programs maintain the flexibility to pursue their education without impacting their quality of life. (Reference: Opening Doors Online: Access, Accountability and Excellence in Veteran Distance Learning) |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| Institutions across the country should adopt the Veterans Promise modeled at Michigan’s Grand Valley State University, which guarantees admission for enlisted high school graduates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |

| Opportunities for Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Stakeholder Group |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Government        | Military | Industry | Academia/<br>Vocational<br>Training Providers | Veteran Service<br>Organizations | Congress |
| The Department of Veterans Affairs should consider whether additional requirements should be imposed on institutions of higher learning that receive GI-Bill benefits and/or participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program so that they are more accountable to their student veteran populations when it comes to informing the student veteran of the GI-Bill payment process. | X                 |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| State Education Systems should adopt legislation requiring public institutions to award military credit for prior learning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | X                 |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| Institutions of higher learning that accept GI-Bill funding should ensure their student veteran populations are supported by developing a personalized orientation that deals with the specific needs of a veteran non-traditional learner.                                                                                                                                 |                   |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| A study should be undertaken to identify ways that students who have earned credit from institutions that are subsequently shut down can have their credits recognized by other schools and receive financial reimbursement for investments made.                                                                                                                           | X                 |          |          |                                               | X                                | X        |
| State Education Systems should craft policy and processes to accept Learner Employer Records following best practices as published by AACRAO.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | X                 |          | X        | X                                             |                                  |          |

# INTRODUCTION

On Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, 2022, the American Legion Veterans Employment and Education Commission convened a National Education and Credentialing Summit in Milwaukee, Wis., in conjunction with the Legion's 103rd National Convention. The summit aimed to move the needle forward regarding identifying and addressing unique issues related to education, credentialing and employment faced by military-connected individuals, including service members, veterans, spouses and dependents. A diverse array of stakeholders came together for the event, including representatives from military, government, industry, organized labor and academia, and others immersed in issues surrounding non-academic post-secondary credentials. A major focus of the summit centered around elucidating the problems and potential solutions surrounding some of our nation's most pressing labor shortages, particularly within the trucking industry and supply chain.

The American Legion has been an active and vocal advocate of civilian credentialing for service members for more than 20 years, sponsoring research, hosting summits, and raising awareness about the importance of facilitating credentialing for this population. Our men and women in uniform receive outstanding technical training and work experience in their military occupations but often have difficulty translating those skills as they transition to the civilian workforce. Holding a civilian credential that attests to an individual veteran's level of skill and competence helps civilian employers understand how military training and experience apply to the positions for which they are hiring.

The summit format consisted of plenary and breakout sessions and featured numerous notable speakers from government and industry. This report provides an overview of the range of topics covered and share key takeaways from the summit, with sessions grouped into five categories:

- Task Force Movement on Trucking
- Department of Defense Career Readiness Programs
- Education and Employment Initiatives
- Industry-Specific Initiatives
- Innovations in Credentialing

The report concludes with specific calls to action that will enable stakeholders to identify ways they can contribute to furthering the ability of military-connected individuals to attain high-quality academic and non-academic credentials while receiving the credit they deserve for the superior training and experience attained throughout their military service.

The agenda for the summit appears as Appendix A. The session summaries are included as Appendix B. The list of participants appears as Appendix C.



# TASK FORCE MOVEMENT ON TRUCKING

A major focus of the summit emphasized the work the Task Force Movement (TFM) has undertaken in response to the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan, which was announced at the White House on April 4, 2022, and is designed to alleviate labor shortages in trucking. The TFM is structured as a grassroots movement to bring together public and private entities to identify ways to facilitate the movement of military-trained truck drivers into civilian trucking jobs. The TFM on Trucking centers on convening stakeholders to participate in four growth groups to identify best practices and opportunities to help highly trained, transitioning service members and veterans attain well-paying, fulfilling jobs within the trucking industry:

1. Veterans service organizations
2. Academic/vocational institutions
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While the initial emphasis of the TFM was on trucking, at the close of the summit, it was announced that the TFM will be expanding to also concentrate on facilitating training and placement of service members and veterans in cybersecurity.

## OPENING REMARKS: BIDEN-HARRIS TRUCKING PLAN

*Speaker: Hon. Patrick Murphy, Task Force Movement Chairman*

The Chairman of the Task Force Movement, the Honorable Patrick Murphy, extended a warm welcome and thanked the summit participants, including The American Legion as well as senior officials from the Departments of Defense, Labor, and Veterans Affairs, the White House, and industry. He noted that our nation has just wrapped up the longest war in history and, that we have a responsibility to ensure that our veterans do not fall through the cracks. They should not be treated as victims, but as civic assets to this nation for their contributions. All veterans need to have a family-sustaining job, which is why the summit, and the work of the Task Force Movement, is so critically important. The nation is currently 80,000 truck drivers short, and it is estimated that we will see a shortage of 300,000 over the next 10 years.

Moving military-trained drivers into civilian truck-driving jobs can be a game changer for industry. The Task Force Movement on Trucking has already made significant accomplishments. Indeed has partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to provide 500 truck-driving school scholarships, which have now been successfully filled. The Department of Transportation has distributed \$3 million in scholarships for commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) for veterans, military families and underrepresented communities to community colleges across the country. The Department of Defense is making its SkillBridge program more robust than ever. All these initiatives underscore that we are at a defining moment in history in trucking with the creation of public-private partnerships to solve a national labor shortage and make use of the quality training and experience our veterans have received in the military.



Honorable Patrick Murphy, Task Force Movement Chairman

## BIDEN-HARRIS TRUCKING PLAN FIRESIDE CHAT

**Moderator:** *Brandon McPherson, TFM Senior Advisor, Founder, Service for Humanity, National Infrastructure Accelerator Alliance*

**Speakers:** *Hon. Patrick Murphy, Chairman, Task Force Movement; Carolyn Renick, Apprenticeship, Licensing, and Credentialing Lead DoL/VETS (sitting in for Hon. James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary DoL/VETS); Hon. Shawn Skelly, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, DoD; Harin Contractor, White House National Economic Council; Nikki McDavid, Chief, Commercial Driver's License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation*

In this fireside chat, senior advisors to the Task Force Movement on Trucking joined moderator Brandon McPherson to discuss the TFM, which came out of the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan that was officially announced at the White House on April 4, 2022. Each contributed their perspective on the importance of the TFM and where their organization aligns with the TFM goals.

### CHAIRMAN OF THE TASK FORCE MOVEMENT ON TRUCKING PERSPECTIVE

*Chairman Murphy* explained that the impetus behind the Task Force Movement is the recognition that veterans can lead the charge to reduce the significant labor shortages in trucking and that through the establishment of new public-private partnerships, stakeholders can work together to raise awareness of the wide variety of family-sustaining jobs in trucking and identify best practices for moving highly qualified transitioning service members and veterans into these jobs. It is important to correct the misconceptions that the majority of truckers are long-haul drivers or that the average pay is low. This is critically important because there are great opportunities in transportation that are not going anywhere.

### WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL PERSPECTIVE

*Contractor, with the White House National Economic Council,* provided background on the establishment of the Task Force Movement on Trucking, which came out of White House efforts last year to understand better how the issues in trucking were affecting the supply-chain crisis. He explained that when the White House started peeling back the onion, it became clear that the problem lies in a fragmented system that involved not just boats, dock workers or excess demand but also the conditions under which truck drivers were working. Truckers were sitting for hours in what is called “detention,” waiting for warehouses or ports to load their trucks with freight, a time when they are not getting paid and often without access to facilities.

President Biden's Build Back Better initiative is designed to promote a more resilient economy and supply chain; without improving the awareness and quality of trucking jobs, this resilience could not be achieved. This was the impetus for the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan and led to the creation of Task Force Movement, which started a whole new way of working with industry. The goal of TFM is to improve access to trucking jobs, with an emphasis on quality and retention. A key component is the Apprenticeship Accelerator, designed to reduce the time it takes to start a registered apprenticeship program from eight months to two days. Resources have also been put into reducing the time it takes to get someone a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and into ensuring access to employment resources, such as the DoD SkillBridge program and DoL employment programs.

### DEPARTMENT OF LABOR PERSPECTIVE

*Renick from the Department of Labor* spoke to the agency's initiatives to expand apprenticeships and how veterans can take advantage of apprenticeship opportunities.

Expanding apprenticeships in this country is an administration and Department of Labor priority focused on providing alternative pathways for employers to develop, track, train and retain talent. DoL is partnering with other agencies, such as the Departments of Defense, Transportation, and Labor, as well as other stakeholders, to promote the use of apprenticeships.

There are numerous benefits to completing an apprenticeship program, including high average starting salaries and high retention rates. On average, someone who completes a registered apprenticeship program receives a salary of \$77,000 compared to someone who completes an undergraduate degree at \$69,000. There is also a 93% employee retention rate for employers among apprenticeship completers, which is a huge benefit for employers experiencing significant turnover. In addition to these benefits, it is important to realize that apprenticeships span many occupations and are not limited to the more traditional occupations in the skilled trades (e.g., brick layers and electricians). A diverse array of industries utilize apprenticeships to attract and retain talent, including cybersecurity, information technology, transportation, health care, and clean energy.

Apprenticeship can be particularly advantageous for the veteran population. When veterans enter registered apprenticeship programs, they can not only access their apprentice wages, but they can tap into their Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, including receiving a monthly housing allowance based on the geographic location of the apprenticeship program's technical instruction. DoL has taken measures to expand apprenticeships within the veteran community, including:

- *Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Apprenticeship Pilot* through which apprenticeship placement counselors were placed in installations across the United States to share with transitioning service members in TAP classes about the value of apprenticeships, resulting in 152 placements into apprenticeship programs.
- *Employment Navigator (EN) and Partnership Pilot (ENPP)* through which more than 54 employment navigators work with 20 installations across the world to provide one-on-one career assistance to interested service members and their spouses outside the traditional TAP classes to assist them in securing meaningful and lasting post-separation careers. DoL has 32 partners with signed memorandums of understanding who can help the ENPP participants with securing apprenticeships, digital matching, and other placement services.
- *Cybersecurity Apprenticeship Sprint* is a national campaign to encourage employers, industry associations, labor unions, and training providers to explore registered apprenticeship as a recruitment, training and retention strategies and connect with DoL's Office of Apprenticeship to develop new apprenticeship programs or quickly join existing programs. It will culminate in November during National Apprenticeship Week (Nov. 14- 20).
- *Apprenticeship.gov* provides a one-stop shop for everything about apprenticeship and includes information for career seekers, employers and educators.

## **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PERSPECTIVE**

*Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness Skelly* spoke about DoD initiatives that support the dual and complementary goals of promoting military readiness and setting service members up for post-service success. The summit objectives of ensuring recognition of military training and experience toward education, credential and employment goals directly align with the department's readiness goals. The stories that veterans tell, and that their family members and friends tell, about their experiences in uniform serving their country and their success post-transition have tremendous impact on recruiting an all-volunteer force and on the success of the Department of Defense and its mission on behalf of the United States.

Educating and training the force to be ready to perform its mission is a critical component of Skelly's portfolio, and that includes promoting credentialing of service members and implementation of the SkillBridge program – a program that allows service members to participate in industry training, apprenticeships or internships during their last 180 days of service. These programs are also an integral part of DoD's support for the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan and the TFM on Trucking, and they were discussed throughout the summit by Skelly and her colleagues.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PERSPECTIVE

*McDavid, Chief, Commercial Driver's License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA),* spoke about DoT's efforts to support current and former military personnel in attaining CDLs. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has been a champion of the TFM on Trucking, and, as a veteran himself, the commitment he has made on the part of DoT carries a lot of weight. She highlighted Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training Program, which provides funding to truck-driving schools and institutions that provide CDL training for current and former military personnel and their spouses. Last year, DoT provided \$3.1 million to schools that offered training to 906 military-connected individuals. Training programs were offered across the country but were concentrated east of the Mississippi. As the program moves forward, DoT is committed to ensuring this money is disbursed equitably across all areas of the country and would welcome ideas about expansion.

FMCSA has also established a Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program, as required under the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, that allows drivers 18-20 with intrastate commercial driver's licenses to operate in interstate commerce under specific conditions. Outside of this pilot program, drivers must be 21 years old or above to operate interstate. This three-year program will help individuals ages 18, 19 and 20 explore interstate trucking careers and help trucking companies hire and train new drivers through the apprenticeship pilot program. The department's goal is to have 3,000 drivers in the apprenticeship pilot program and 1,000 motor carriers to employ the drivers. National Guard and Reserve military personnel will be welcome to participate.

## BIDEN-HARRIS TRUCKING PLAN – TASK FORCE GROWTH GROUP PANEL

**Introduction:** *Cassie Byard, TFM Executive Director. Moderator: Daniel Kunze, TFM Senior Advisor Technology & Partnerships.*

**Speakers:** *Sarah Amico, CEO Jack Cooper Transit; Nick Geale, Vice President for Workforce & Labor, American Trucking Associations; Sam Whitehurst, Vice President, Dixon Center for Military & Veterans Services; Jason Altmire, President/CEO, Career Education Colleges & Universities; Nikki McDavid, Chief, Commercial Driver's License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation*

Byard, the TFM Executive Director, discussed the vision of the TFM – to provide financial stability, a sense of purpose for life balance to those transitioning service members, veterans and families – and stressed the importance of convening the variety of stakeholders involved in the TFM to create effective partnerships and put policy to pavement. She introduced the moderator, Kunze, TFM Senior Advisor Technology and Partnership, who led the leaders of the four TFM growth sessions through a discussion of their efforts and conclusions to date. The TFM Growth Group leaders and their affiliations are:

- Industry Growth Group – Amico and Geale, who both represent organizations with decades of experience in the trucking industry.
  - » Amico is CEO of Jack Cooper – North America's largest car haul company – and a certified woman-owned business, which has been in business for 95 years
  - » Geale is Vice President of Workforce and Labor at the American Trucking Organization – a membership organization founded in 1933 that represents every sector of the industry, from LTL to truckload, agriculture and livestock to auto haulers, and from large motor carriers to small mom-and-pop operations, and that exists to promote and support the trucking industry and raise awareness of the industry's vital importance to the country.
- Veterans Service Organization Growth Group – Whitehurst is Vice President for the Dixon Center for Military and Veteran Services, a nonprofit that works with organizations and communities that want to increase their impact in supporting veterans and their families.

- Education/Vocational Growth Group – Altmire is President and CEO of Career Education Colleges and Universities, a national association representing private postsecondary career schools, which produces more than half of the nation’s truck drivers.
- Government Growth Group – McDavid is the chief of the Commercial Driver’s License Division at the Federal Carrier Safety Administration at the U.S. Department of Transportation. Her office is responsible for establishing the national Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) standards for state driver’s license agencies.

Each growth group lead brought to the discussion their unique perspective on what is working well within the trucking industry and where there are opportunities to improve – especially as it relates to recruiting and retaining more military-affiliated applicants. While there were themes related to specific stakeholder/growth groups, there were also common themes. The key takeaways are described below.

**Current Labor Situation.** The truck-driver labor shortage needs to be solved quickly. The current labor shortfall is 80,000 drivers and it is expected to be 300,000 over the next 10 years. Relaxing the restrictions on drivers who are under 21 could be one way to potentially alleviate the shortage. Currently, truck drivers do not enter the industry between the ages of 18 and 20 in part because under 21-year-old drivers are not allowed to cross state lines. The average drivers are in their late 40s, and the average driver entering the profession is generally in their mid to late 30s.

In response to section 5404 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the Department of Transportation sponsored a pilot program that allowed individuals between the ages of 18 and 21 with military driving experience to operate commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce. Unfortunately, the pilot program was not very successful and there was limited participation. DoT recognizes that there may be ways to better promote such a program by speaking the language that would appeal to the military drivers.

**Raising Awareness of Truck Driving Careers.** A consistent theme across all the growth groups is the need to raise awareness about the diversity of jobs in the trucking industry and to dispel misconceptions about the types and quality of truck-driving jobs to attract more drivers. There are many misconceptions that need to be dispelled with facts. Some key points that need to be emphasized are:

- Truck-driving salaries are high.
  - » Median starting salary is \$70,000 per year.
  - » Many first-year drivers make six figures a year, have fully funded health insurance premiums, have a pension and union seniority, and have a company that treats them like family.
- Truck-driver workforce is diverse – 25% are Hispanic, 20% are African American, and 10% are Asian American.
- Pay is equitable – for example, at Jack Cooper, women drivers receive the same pay as men. There is, however, a need to hire more women drivers as they currently make up only 7% of the workforce.

**Considerations for Service Members and Veterans** A variety of factors should be considered that are unique to service members and veterans, including:

- Members of the various components - Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve have different needs and challenges that should be considered separately.
- Military commanders need to understand the quality job opportunities in the trucking industry and promote them.
- Not everyone in the military wants to stay in the same occupational area when they enter the civilian workforce.
- Military leadership is extremely focused on recruiting and retention and often loses sight of the importance of ensuring that service members have a seamless transition to the civilian workforce. Veterans and their families are some of the biggest influencers on the ability of the military to recruit.

A service member who experiences a successful career in the military and is able to transition into a fulfilling civilian career that offers work with purpose is a strong recruiting message.

- Service members should begin planning for post-service careers early in their military careers, to include working on credentials long before they are in the process of transition.
- There is a need to increase service member, veteran and industry awareness of programs that can aid recruiting of service members and veterans into civilian truck-driving jobs, including:
  - » Opportunities through DoD's SkillBridge program.
  - » Availability of the Military Skills and Knowledge Test Waiver programs that are offered by states that preclude the need for eligible service members and veterans to attain their CDL.

**Education/Vocational Considerations.** Key opportunities to alleviate barriers for education and training providers include:

- Promoting a better understanding of the jargon and the lingo that the military uses, versus that of the civilian workforce.
- Helping veterans find a way to access the funding they need and to navigate program-eligibility requirements
- Better tracking of veteran students because they often do not self-identify as veterans.
- Developing appropriate parameters that would allow education and training providers access to military installations to let veterans know that trucking is a viable career.
- Increasing participation in SkillBridge to promote education and training opportunities for transitioning service members.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF TASK FORCE MOVEMENT ON CYBERSECURITY**

At the close of the summit, the Hon. Patrick Murphy announced that, in support of the White House Executive Order on Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity and the U.S. Department of Labor's Cybersecurity Apprenticeship Sprint, the next major focus area of Task Force Movement is on moving transitioning service members, veterans and military spouses into jobs in cybersecurity.

The TFM for Cybersecurity will be hosting specific breakout sessions with various stakeholders, including employers, associations and labor unions, veterans service organizations, academic and vocational institutions, as well as government agencies, to include the military services. The TFM will submit a report back to the administration upon completion of the convenings that will consist of potential long- and short-term remedies and recommendations for operationalized solutions based on the findings of the convenings.

# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CAREER READINESS PROGRAMS

As noted by Assistant Secretary Skelly, the Department of Defense, Force Education and Training, offers several programs designed to enhance military readiness while also promoting military recruiting, professional development, retention, and transition. The Summit included breakout sessions highlighting DOD's SkillBridge and Credentialing Programs and a powerful tool called MilGears, designed to help service members and veterans identify career options in-service and post-service.

## DOD'S SKILLBRIDGE PROGRAM AND MODEL PROGRAMS IN TRUCKING

**Panel 1 Moderator:** Lisa Lutz, President & CEO, SOLID, LLC

**Speakers:** Gary Schaub, Senior Advisor for Professional Military Education, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness; Jerry Elam, Program Manager, Military Partnerships, ABF; Mike Hazard, Training Specialist, Veterans in Piping, United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters

The DoD SkillBridge program connects service members with industry partners, providing opportunities for service members to gain valuable civilian work experience through specific industry training, apprenticeships, or internships during their last 180 days of service. In the mutually beneficial partnership, service members participating in the program continue to receive their full military compensation and benefits while gaining valuable training and on-the-job experience; meanwhile, industry partners gain access to the world's most highly trained and motivated workforce, at no cost to them.

SkillBridge eases the transition process for service members, allowing them to bridge the gap between the end of service and the beginning of their civilian careers by participating in opportunities that build on the education and training they received in the military and create connections within industry. Industry partners offer real-world training and work experience for in-demand fields of work, while evaluating the service member's suitability for the work.

**DOD Focus Areas** – DoD continues to focus on key priorities, including:

- Transportation and Trucking – There are over 330 total organizations from the trucking and transportation career fields with established SkillBridge programs across the country trying to help meet increased needs created by supply-chain shortfalls currently faced on a national level.
  - » The SkillBridge team partners closely with the White House's Task Force Movement effort and have created a section of the SkillBridge website containing specific guidance for service members interested in joining these critical and potentially lucrative careers in trucking.
- Medical – The DoD SkillBridge and the Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) sites have added focus points and highlighted opportunities for members to pursue medical support careers, consistent with Congress and the White House's emphasis in the *Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021*.
  - » The DoD SkillBridge website receives over 1 million visits per quarter, and in the third quarter of fiscal year 2022, the website received nearly 5,000 individual information request tickets or applications from either interested SkillBridge partner organizations or service members.

### **Rapid Growth in SkillBridge**

Today, SkillBridge is a rapidly growing, popular and universally supported program. Expanded across multiple administrations, recent notable champions of SkillBridge include President Biden (*Plan to Keep Our Sacred Obligation to Our Veterans* | Joe Biden), Sens. Duckworth & Graham (*BILLS-116s876rs.pdf* ([congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov))), and Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman (SEAC) Colon-Lopez, who recognized

SkillBridge as a way for service members to take the “good habits and work ethic” instilled by the military back to private industry (Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff - SEAC Ramón “CZ” Colón-López - YouTube).

The number of service members interested in SkillBridge opportunities continues to increase, with nearly 15,000 authorized and released to participate last year alone. Many more are inquiring each year.

- With approximately 200,000 service members separating each year, if their local commanders clear just 20% to participate, that will still equate to some 40,000+ military members participating in SkillBridge programs annually as they transition from active service to civilian careers.
- DoD expects to exceed that number in coming years, which is quite an injection of high-caliber, well-trained talent into the workforce and leadership ranks of the U.S. economy each year.

Fortunately, there has also been a commensurate level of growth in training and employment partners who are eager to participate in the SkillBridge program to support these service members transitioning into their careers, post-military service. This unique opportunity offered by the Department of Defense enables service members returning to civilian life to attain meaningful and gainful employment – not just short-term jobs, but careers with good pay and opportunities for advancement, just as they had while in service.

SkillBridge partners described their unique experiences with SkillBridge, including:

- **ABF, Teamster Military Assistance Program.** As one of the original SkillBridge partners, ABF sponsors the Teamster Military Assistance Program. They currently have two programs for Commercial Driver’s License training – one at Ft. Carson and one at Ft. Riley and are expanding the programs to other bases. The programs are six weeks long and run concurrently. They offer six to eight classes per year with 10 students per class. ABF has committed to small class sizes for safety reasons. SkillBridge opportunities are also offered to spouses when space is available. ABF is targeting programs, not just to train truck drivers; they also train operations supervisors, mechanics, shop supervisors and truckload sales. The program costs nothing to the service member. Service members do not have to use their GI Bill, and ABF pays for housing and food.
- **Veterans in Piping, (VIP) United Association of Plumbers, Pipefitters, Sprinklerfitters, and HVACR Service Technicians.** The VIP program started prior to the authorization of the DoD SkillBridge program by Congress and was the impetus for the authorizing legislation. VIP started in 2008 and trains for three disciplines – Pipefitting/welding, HVAC, and Fire Sprinklerfitting. All VIP programs are 18 weeks long and provide 720 hours of training. VIP advertises the programs by canvassing the installations on which they offer programs and through existing students. They are on seven different installations with nine programs. VIP maintains a 10:1 student to instructor ratio and has graduated over 2,900 transitioning service members. All program graduates receive guaranteed job placement and direct entry into the UA’s five-year DoL registered apprenticeship program. VIP graduates who enter the UA’s five-year apprenticeship program earn a living wage with employer-paid benefits for themselves and their families.

Recently, the UA partnered with Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas and the Dixon Center in launching a mental health initiative that has led to the implementation of a new program within VIP called VIP MAP or VIP Member Assistance Program. VIP MAP is a peer-support program that helps in taking a more holistic approach to preparing VIPs for their new careers with the UA. VIP MAP focuses on breaking the stigma surrounding mental health by creating a help-giving, help-seeking working environment where people can feel comfortable asking for help. VIP staff members train together to build their mental-health literacy, prevention of suicide, crisis intervention, as well as, how to direct someone to additional mental-health resources when needed. By partnering with Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas and the Dixon Center, the UA VIP program is better addressing the needs of our transitioning service members and providing them with the resources needed to ease the stress of transitioning from the military to the civilian workforce. VIP MAP has been very successful



and stands committed to doing everything possible to prevent the loss of a life to suicide. If you or someone you know is in crisis, contact the Mental Health Hotline at 988.

**Panel 2 Moderator:** Elizabeth Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants

**Speakers:** Kevin Duesterhaus, Illinois Secretary of State, Director of Driver Services; Jafi Roskey, Werner Senior Manager of Military Programs, Apprenticeship Program Manager, Driver Ambassador Manager, U.S. Air Force veteran; Thomas Serafin, Director of Safety, Training & Military Affairs, Florida Rock & Tank Lines, Inc.; Lindley Davis, Vice President, Human Resources, Jack Cooper, American Trucking Association

Belcaster opened by sharing lessons learned from her extensive involvement with the SkillBridge program since its inception. There is a need to go back to the fundamentals and remember that SkillBridge was created because DoD was spending almost \$1 billion on unemployment, and transitioning service members needed clearer paths to successful careers, post-separation. Previously, civilian employers and military rarely came together to coordinate training unless it was through a specific contracting opportunity; SkillBridge presented a means to fill that gap. The panelists shared their own perspectives on what has worked well with SkillBridge.

- **Werner Enterprises.** Werner started its first apprenticeship program for truck driving in 2006, followed by the first for diesel mechanics in 2015. More recently, in response to DoL's 90-Day Trucking Apprenticeship Challenge, Werner created a program-management apprenticeship program. It has had a SkillBridge program since 2017 and is on five installations. The program is four to five weeks long. Werner has a suite of military programs that have been remarkably successful, including supporting the Military Skills Test Waiver program since 2015. The SkillBridge program has yielded top notch service members and retention has been higher for veterans than non-veterans.
- **Office of Illinois Secretary of State.** Illinois offers both the Military Skills Test Waiver program and the Even Exchange program. All classes of vehicles are eligible – A, B and C. For the Skills Test Waiver program, they have received 591 applications resulting in 389 approvals and 202 denials. For the Even Exchange program, they have received 436 Even Exchange applications, of which there were 297 approvals and 139 denials. Eighty percent of the applicants were Army 88M – Motor Transport Operators from Ft. Leonard Wood. They have not had any issues with either waiver program.
- **Florida Rock and Tank Lines.** Florida Rock and Tank Lines is a new SkillBridge program operating in Florida and Georgia. Eighty percent of their work is HAZMAT and drivers are required to have their HAZMAT endorsement, and the other 20% is non-HAZMAT. Accordingly, their SkillBridge program has two tracks. The HAZMAT Endorsement Track applies to those eligible for the skills test waiver. The non-HAZMAT track is a four-to-six-week program that puts the participant through a state driving school at no cost.
- **Jack Cooper.** Jack Cooper is new to SkillBridge and is excited to grow the program and learn from others, such as ABF. Their program is oriented to long haul drivers of car carriers. Jack Cooper has a range of opportunities for veterans, military spouses and transitioning service members.

## MILITARY CREDENTIALING PROGRAMS

**Moderator:** Deanna Parker.

**Speakers:** Keith Boring, Director, Navy Credentialing Programs; Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs; Mike Talley, Director, Navy COOL; Steve Keck, Chief, Career Investment Division, U.S. Coast Guard.

More than 200,000 service members leave the military each year, with the majority seeking employment in the civilian sector. Although highly experienced and well-trained, many veterans experience barriers to employment, partly due to the difficulty of translating their military education, training, and experience to civilian employers. The services have developed and supported programs to assist service members in overcoming these barriers by improving pathways aligning military education and skills

with civilian occupations and supporting the attainment of civilian credentials that demonstrate to employers that their training and experience are on par with that of their civilian counterparts.

The evolution of the services' credentialing programs began more than 20 years ago when conversations with stakeholders identified barriers to employment for veterans and participated in initiatives to draw conclusions. The introduction of Army COOL (2002) and Navy COOL (2006) began a phase of developing and testing solutions to provide information to service members and fund civilian credentials related to service members' military occupations. Following the success of the Army and Navy, the Marine Corps and Air Force stood up COOL programs by the end of 2014.

In 2015, credentialing was codified into Titles 50 & 10 of the US Code<sup>1</sup> through legislation that required a program to assist service members in obtaining professional credentials. Building on this, in 2017, DoD was required to provide quality assurance of the credentials supported through the services' credentialing programs. DoD issued DOD Instruction 1322.33 "DOD Credentialing Programs" in October 2021 to provide guidance and oversight across the military departments. Credentialing programs in DoD and the military services continue to expand and innovate.

Current programs and tools supported by DoD that are available to translate military skills and education to facilitate credentialing of service members, aid in signaling skills earned while in the military, and support civilian employment and educational goals are described below. These programs include the following:

- Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL)
- MilGears (Powered by COOL)
- SkillBridge and Other Industry Coordination
- United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP)
- Voluntary Education/Tuition Assistance
- Initiatives to enhance Military to Civilian Crosswalk

## MILGEARS, POWERED BY COOL

***Speakers:** Keith Boring, Director, Navy Credentialing Programs, Interservice Credentialing Working Group Chair; Command Master Chief Edward Lewis, Force Readiness Command, United States Coast Guard.*

The MilGears platform provides a suite of tools that support service members and veterans in career planning both in-service and through transition by highlighting the opportunities available to them and providing guidance on how to pursue them. It is based on the concept that all learning counts, and the platform takes into account all the skills and experience that a service member or veteran might hold from both formal and informal learning acquired in the military or elsewhere. While the platform was started with the Navy, it has since expanded to all services.

Boring and Master Chief Lewis were instrumental in conceptualizing MilGears and explained that the initial Navy-centric approach of MilGears was designed to expand upon the Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) model to identify credentials related to an individual service member's unique combination of education, training and experience. While Navy COOL provides similar functionality, it is limited to matching Navy ratings, designators, collateral duties, and training, without explicit consideration of an individual service member's unique qualifications. MilGears takes that model a step further, allowing for a more user-centric, interactive web-based experience with customized results.

After the launch of Navy MilGears, it became apparent that the concept could benefit all service members and, in 2022, MilGears was expanded to include all the military services. Developed by SOLID, LLC, the MilGears platform builds on each service's COOL platform and offers several customized tools to directly support service members as they explore new education and career opportunities throughout their entire military lifecycles. These tools include:

- The **Engage My Career (EMC)** tool analyzes a service member's unique history – their military duties and training, civilian education and credentialing, and apprenticeships – to provide customized results. This information is personal and specific to the individual user (i.e., not generic to military occupation, grade, or other generalities).
- The **Mil-2-Mariner (M2M)** tool translates military training and experience into recognizable maritime outcomes required for maritime industry credentialing and post-service employment.
- The **Quick Explorer (QE)** tool provides a variety of non-customized search options, including:
  - » Credentials – explore opportunities and recommendations related to academic degrees, industry certifications and licensure, and apprenticeship programs
  - » Career Goals – explore opportunities and recommendations based on civilian, federal, or military career goals
  - » Military Occupation – compare current military occupation to other military occupations, show professional military development, civilian pathways and options for changing military occupation
  - » INTERESTS – explore opportunities and recommendations based on self-identified interests, likes, dislikes, and activities
- The **Cyberspace IT/Cybersecurity Workforce (Cyber IT/CSWF)** tool guides individuals through a series of questions that display how they stack up against the cyber requirements for Navy CSWF roles.

By providing information about credentialing and education relevant to unique users and putting it within the context of occupational goals, MilGears provides a tool that can help service members connect the dots between credentialing and their career goals. This enables them to better plan for their futures and identify the many ways their military careers might support achievement of their goals by highlighting related programs like COOL, Tuition Assistance, GI Bill, USMAP and SkillBridge

# EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

The idea that many military veterans are regarded as not “college material” and will not succeed in college has been argued since the establishment of the GI Bill in 1944. However, the notion of veterans being incapable of achieving academic standards quickly dissipated as student veterans not only met, but often exceeded, expectations. Similarly, the current generation of transitioning veterans is highly motivated to excel in college and view a post-secondary certificate or degree as essential to their future. The question then becomes whether institutions, employers, and credentialing programs are prepared to support these transitioning veterans. The summit included several sessions designed to address the unique challenges that military-connected students face in pursuing their educational and civilian career goals.

## OPENING REMARKS – JARED LYON, PRESIDENT AND CEO, STUDENT VETERANS OF AMERICA

Recent numbers show that the United States produces between 160,000 and 170,000 veterans each year. Nearly 80% of that population has served six years or less, with the majority returning to their homes of record after leaving active-duty service. Institutions of higher learning, credentialing programs and employers are struggling with how to recruit these service members. Some innovative thought has formed around this challenge and has been termed “The Veterans Promise.”

This promise takes advantage of aggregate data on the transitioning force, which explains how service members make this transition, and that they tend to return to their homes of record within six years of having left that home. If organizations are looking to recruit service members and veterans, they should be forming connections with these individuals *before* they join the military. The first school in the country to do this was Grand Valley State University (GVSU), which provided every graduating high school senior from the state of Michigan with guaranteed deferred enrollment, then followed up with each individual two years post-graduation to remind them of the existing opportunity, with a more personalized and direct connection.

By making the connection early, GVSU sends a clear message to young people who choose military service after high school that they have a guaranteed higher-education opportunity post-service. During their military service, GVSU reaches out to these individuals again to provide guidance and support in using their tuition assistance or GI Bill.

Service members put their lives on hold for an average of six years to serve their country. When they return home, most enroll in school full-time while working full-time or part-time. If institutions of higher learning, certification programs, and employers can work together, we can build a future where individuals can simultaneously utilize the GI Bill to pursue their education, achieve a certificate/credential, and work in their industry, gaining that industry experience they need all at the same time.

## EDUCATION QUALITY

**Moderator:** Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

**Speakers:** Gokhan Coskun, Executive Director of Yunus Emre Institute (Turkish Educational & Cultural Center Founder of INTED); Meg O’Grady, Senior Vice President, Military and Government Programs, National University System; Will Hubbard, Vice President for Veterans and Military Policy, Veterans Education Success

Service members and veterans deservedly have access to significant financial assistance to pursue educational opportunities both in-service and post-service. These educational benefits facilitate their ability to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities that might have been out of their reach if not for their military service. There is a significant need, however, to ensure that the investments they make

in their time, and their limited educational benefits, are towards high-quality programs that will yield workforce advantages. This session discussed measures that are being taken to ensure service members and veterans receive high-quality educational opportunities.

**Key Takeaways:**

- Regardless of the type of institution (for-profit or state school), the focus should be more on the outcome, not the income. Quality must be the final product, not just the quality of a degree but the pathways to get to that degree. There is a need to define this term.
- The triad (agencies, education, and employers) are not on the same table. Employers say that higher education isn't meeting the mark for their needs, and the industry needs to be more proactive in communicating what is required to achieve certification.
- Higher education is changing, and technology is driving that transition. But there has been a technology learning curve, and quality education in today's world starts with ensuring all students become tech-savvy. COVID-19 shed light on this issue and helped speed up the trajectory of incorporating technology into the classroom.
- Various instructional techniques must be utilized to support all learning styles – a holistic approach. Institutions need to recognize that not all students have access to broadband, which can be a fundamental limitation to distance learning.
- Better guidance counseling within institutions of higher learning for the nontraditional student. Institutions should identify and communicate to the student veteran who they can go to for guidance and what resources are available.
- Institutions should develop and require a personalized orientation for the student veteran learner. The Navy College Program for Afloat College Education (NCPACE) is a good example.
- There is a need for a systematic integration of the workforce, academia and government policymakers, to come together to determine quality standards. A coalition should be established to define what these quality standards should be.

## **OPENING DOORS ONLINE: ACCESS ACCOUNTABILITY & EXCELLENCE IN VETERAN DISTANCE LEARNING**

**Moderator:** Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

**Speakers:** Col. Keith A. Casey, U.S. Army (ret.), Director of Veteran Services, Concordia University Wisconsin; Esmeralda Silva, Vice President Student Affairs, Alliant University/President, Council of College & Military Educators (CCME); Terrell Odom, Ed.D., MS-IDT, MBA, Director, Office for Military-Affiliated Communities, University of Chicago.

The COVID-19 pandemic fast-tracked the online education and virtual degree programs of many institutions and starkly demonstrated the need for the Department of Veterans Affairs to revise legislation to reflect the current and future state of higher education. Joe Sharpe, Director of the National Employment and Education Division for The American Legion, stated in his recent testimony before the Subcommittees on Economic Opportunity and Technology Modernization, Committee on Veterans Affairs that, "Currently, many veterans face difficulties in seeking online opportunities due to unclear or inconsistent policies between federal agencies. A recent report from The American Legion highlights the importance of online education as a pathway to degree completion and how changes to VA statutes and regulations can increase military-affiliated student access to high-quality online education."

Many two- and four-year institutions have recently made great strides in adapting their degree programs to offer online, virtual, and hybrid options. Below are some key takeaways from this conversation.

### Key Takeaways:

- By being forced to take classes online as their only option at the height of the pandemic, many student veterans realized they could succeed via online and hybrid learning.
- In addition to hybrid or online instructor-led learning, there is value for institutions to consider asynchronous learning, where the onus is on the student to complete the work. Asynchronous learning allows learners more freedom and flexibility to complete the work at their own pace within set deadlines.
- Asynchronous learning breaks down barriers to participation in the classroom and allows the student to be in control.
- Asynchronous learning is sometimes not covered by the GI Bill. VA should work with institutions and state approving agencies to review what online learning should qualify for GI Bill approval.
- Accessibility needs have significantly increased by moving to online learning. Many student veterans still struggle with disclosing what needs they have when it comes to learning virtually. Institutions should be reaching out to these student veterans to discuss how they can be supported in this way.
- The University of Chicago discovered significant skill gaps and training opportunities for faculty. Many faculty struggled with moving their classes online and can now get the training they need to ensure they can also teach in this new environment.
- Concordia University of Wisconsin realized the need for two different learning portals because students who are completely attending online have different needs. They also created a completely virtual academic resource center for online students where they have 24/7 access to counselors, tutors, and other resources.
- The Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) remains a significant factor in the type of modality a student veteran chooses to receive their education. Currently, student veterans receive only 50% MHA for being fully enrolled online and are inherently penalized for choosing to apply their benefits towards distance learning.

## LESSONS FROM A RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT MODEL DESIGNED TO PROTECT STUDENTS AND TAXPAYERS

**Moderator:** Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

**Speakers:** Garrett FitzGerald, CEO, CollegeRecon; Dan Wellman, Administrator, Illinois State Approving Agency; Julia Gusse, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Schnell Carraway, Chief of Strategic Initiatives & Integration, Education Service, Veterans Benefits Administration.

For nearly 20 years, veterans who have utilized the post-9/11 GI Bill have been targeted and taken advantage of by low-quality institutions. While much of this \$12 billion per year investment by the federal government is well spent, as The American Legion stated in its January 2022 report, some colleges continue to target veterans with deceptive ads and sales tactics and even go as far as falsely guaranteeing employment with six-figure incomes upon graduation.

GI Bill-eligible schools are regulated by the State Approving Agencies (SAAs) and have mainly focused on financial compliance rather than the quality of the education received and if this education is putting the veteran in the best place to be successful upon graduation. This review system was insufficient and desperately needed to be expanded to assess the education quality at institutions of higher learning.

With the passing of the Forever GI Bill in 2017, Congress included a directive that SAAs must conduct risk-based reviews evaluating the caliber of these GI Bill-eligible institutions, but for the first two years, progress was very slow. In response to this lack of action, the Lumina Foundation, Education Counsel (EdCounsel) and Nelson, Mullins, Riley and Scarborough, teamed up with the National

Association of State Approving Agencies to develop a pilot to adequately implement a risk-based review using a data-informed approach.

**Key Takeaways:**

- The current risk-based survey model can only be effective to the extent that data on critical institution performance indicators, including graduation rates, closure risk, average debt, and long-term earnings, is available for SAAs.
- This new risk-based model has received positive responses from VA, the SAAs and lawmakers.
- In reaction to this new pilot and the positive responses from VA and the SAAs, Congress authorized every SAA to conduct this type of risk-based review as part of the Isakson and Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020. As of October 2022, all SAAs are now required to review GI Bill-eligible institutions using this risk-based survey model.
- This pilot has also demonstrated that data availability and quality are essential. Without robust, valid, publicly available data, there is no basis for building a risk model and nothing to distinguish a high-risk school from a low-risk school.
- The risk filter in the model correctly predicted bad outcomes at institutions that wouldn't have been noticeable before conducting deeper review. Schools identified by the filter as higher risk had:
  - » Higher rates of student complaints to federal, state and consumer agencies
  - » Much higher rates of complaints about costs and high-pressure or misleading recruiting tactics
  - » Increased likelihood of concerning advertising practices, particularly implying nonexistent military endorsements
  - » Lower likelihood of awarding transfer credit or charging the correct published tuition, among many other negative findings

## STUDENT VETERAN PANEL

***Moderator:** Alex Pirila, Chapter Advisor and Associate Director of Military and Veteran Student Services, Loyola University Chicago*

***Speakers:** Student veterans from Loyola University Chicago: Josh Jones, Colin Andersen, Olivia Rodriguez and Carly Fournier.*

Student veterans face unique challenges from their fellow students when attending institutions of higher learning. Represented on this panel were four student veterans from Loyola University Chicago to talk about their experiences as students, the challenges and barriers they are currently facing or have overcome, and recommendations for what they feel could be solutions for student veterans across the country.

**Challenges:**

- Finding a sense of community was difficult for those who attended community college before transferring to a four-year institution, as everyone just attended class and went back home. It was challenging to connect with other students. Some of these student veterans also faced a lack of community in their first years at Loyola University before a student veteran organization was established.
- Many veterans have struggled with understanding and navigating the GI Bill and VA health care. The transition classes they attended had so much information in such a short amount of time that it was difficult to keep track of what to act on and how to navigate it.
- The education classes in the transition program didn't teach or assist these veterans on how to actually apply to colleges.

- The lack of military leaders and command support for these service members was astounding. This left these service members with little guidance on how to properly transition out of the military and into college.
- Every student veteran on the panel had issues with receiving adequate credit for military service. Few credits were transferred, leaving some students even further behind in their education goals.

**Potential Solutions:**

- Having an established office solely dedicated to military and veteran services would help the student veteran understand and navigate GI Bill benefits, feel a sense of community and belonging, and promote advocacy to improve the student veteran experience.
- There must be better support from military leaders that is clearly communicated at all levels of the chain of command. Without the support of command and unit leaders through a service member’s transition, they don’t get the courage or time to plan. They transition with little help, guidance, and planning, and many lack the support and guidance of family to assist, so they are left to their own devices to find a school that accepts the GI Bill but may not really help them for their futures. As a result, they end up wasting the government’s money and their own time and end up being further behind in their career goals.
- Colleges and universities that offer the yellow ribbon program and accept the GI Bill should be more responsible in knowing how the process works and should be able to communicate that process to the student veteran.
- Student veterans should work within their colleges and universities to establish a student veteran organization through the Student Veterans of America (SVA). The SVA can help student veterans work through that process.

## MILITARY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

*Moderator: Sam Whitehurst, Vice President, Dixon Center for Military and Veterans Services*

*Speakers: Barbara Carson, Managing Director of Programs and Services, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families; Cassie Gabelt Byard, Executive Director of Task Force Movement and military spouse J.D. Network; Judy Elias, Founder and President Heroes to Heroes; Erica McMannes, Chief People and Community Officer and Founder, Instant Teams*

Military spouses have committed to supporting their partners during military service. However, despite their sacrifices, they tend to be passed over in credentialing and educational conversations, as society often fails to consider their unique differences and challenges. Some of the largest obstacles facing this demographic are unique credentialing, employment and entrepreneurship challenges. Due to their frequent moves, some of the largest obstacles facing this demographic are unique credentialing, employment and entrepreneurship challenges. There is also a perception that all military spouses have the same experiences, needs or challenges, and that solutions can be delivered in a one-size-fits-all approach. Nevertheless, military spouses seeking employment face different barriers and require varying solutions.

**Key Takeaways:**

- The portability of careers and certifications/licenses is critical. As military spouses move from state to state, many must start their careers over or apply for new credentials.
  - » The D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF), “Force Behind the Force” series has published a collection of complementary products geared toward educating employers, hiring managers, and human resources professionals interested in hiring and retaining military spouses.
- The military spouse community isn’t usually identified as a business solution. Language needs to change on how employers speak about spouses as talent.



- Remote work is vital for this demographic, and it is transforming opportunities for military spouses, especially in the wake of COVID-19.
- Many organizations aid military spouses in helping them break down barriers to employment and credentialing. A few were represented in this panel:
  - » Instant Teams facilitated employment for more than 600 military spouses by transforming their skillsets, equipping them with the required technology, and making employer connections. Two use cases are below:
    - Spouses with teaching certifications now work for Instant Teams ed tech customers, who grew exponentially during COVID because schools desperately needed platforms to facilitate learning. These military spouses are now utilizing their expertise to help current classroom teachers navigate these software learning platforms and provide customer support to families and children.
    - A team completely staffed by military spouses with years of training as crisis solutions managers and casualty notifications run a 24/7 crisis-response line for a cybersecurity firm. Experiences that spouses may never think of are skillsets that can prove vital for this type of work.
  - » One of the programs that IVMF has for upskilling and reskilling is the Onward to Opportunity program, which is available for veterans and military spouses alike. Onward to Opportunity is a no-cost industry-focused and validated career skills program that connects transitioning service members and military spouses to high-demand careers in customer-service excellence, information technology and business management.
  - » The Military Spouse J.D. Network (MSJDN) supports military spouses in the legal profession by advocating for licensing accommodations for military spouse attorneys, educating the public about the challenges faced by career-minded military spouses and their families, encouraging the hiring of military spouses and providing a network connecting military spouse attorneys with each other and their supporters.
    - The MSJDN holds a professional development conference each year allowing military spouses to leave with tangible items such as professional headshots, roadmaps and resume translation for civilian and federal positions alike.

We are in a unique time in the current labor market. Skill-based hiring is opening new doors and creating new opportunities for many demographics, especially when it comes to remote work. As a result, military spouses have opportunities to succeed in the current labor market as many employers are focusing on skills-based hiring, which has revolutionized the traditional career path.

# INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ISSUES

A consistent theme throughout the summit was the importance of public-private partnerships to alleviate barriers and facilitate the education, credentialing and post-service employment of service members and veterans. Several summit sessions focused on this and are summarized below.

## LUNCH REMARKS - JOE FERREIRA, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS, AIRLINE DIVISION

Joe Ferreira is an Army veteran who has made a career in the aviation industry. He took his first flight from Lisbon to John F. Kennedy Airport when his family immigrated to the United States in 1965. Ferreira started his pursuit in the aviation industry by enlisting in the U.S. Army as a 67N -- Helicopter Repairman. He transitioned out of the Army as a warrant officer, participating in a certification program that he began while still serving on active duty. Utilizing this program allowed him to leave military service with an Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) Technician license through the Piedmont Aerospace Program. Possessing this certification, paired with his experience in the military, allowed him to secure adequate employment after transition, and has continued to serve him well throughout his aviation career.

Later in Ferreira's career, he teamed up with the governor of New Jersey. Together, they started a small hiring initiative to fill open positions at Continental Airlines with transitioning service members stationed at Fort Diggs and McGuire Airforce Base.

Today, Ferreira remains committed to taking care of the veteran population through his work with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The Teamsters will be rolling out a new apprenticeship program for aviation technicians interested in becoming licensed A&Ps, and they are looking to fill many of these apprenticeships with transitioning service members.



Joe Ferreira,  
Director,  
International  
Brotherhood of  
Teamsters, Airline  
Division

## PROMOTING CREDENTIALING AND EMPLOYMENT IN HEALTH CARE

**Speakers:** Brent Murphy, John Patrick University of Health and Applied Sciences; Katie Purswell, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director, The American Legion; Julia Gusse, Senior Advisor to Undersecretary of Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration, DVA; Terrell Odom, Ed.D., MBA, MPA, VSO, Associate Director for Programs and Services for Military Affiliated Communities; Barry Shore, USA Care Living; Patricia Sandoval, Executive Vice President, Atlas Health Foundation

Recognizing a growing shortage in all areas of the health-care industry, several organizations have joined forces to collaborate and create the Pathways to Career initiative. The John Patrick University initiative promotes credentialing and employment for transitioning service members. The pathways focus on partnering with employers, accreditors and educators to reduce barriers for transitioning service members seeking gainful employment in the health-care industry.

**Key takeaways:** Pathways to Careers is a viable model that could be duplicated to assist military and veteran transition into health-care careers.

- Promote the idea that careers in health care are available, worthwhile and well-paying.
- Identify individuals with military health-care training about to muster out and who have mustered out in the past six months.

- Connect USA CareLiving with counselors on bases worldwide who know of service people in military health care.
- Educate The American Legion members about the opportunities in health care offered by USA CareLiving.

Several different initiatives use the steps above. The lesson from these initiatives is simple: these partnerships are changing the way the health-care industry hires veterans and filling their recruitment talent pipeline with motivated and highly skilled individuals while meeting the needs of employers, allowing health-care providers to serve their constituents better. The panelists recognized that the Pathways to Careers initiative can benefit from greater unity and more streamlined efforts and hopes others will join them in this endeavor.

## THE COMMERCIAL AVIATION PILOT AND MECHANIC SHORTAGE AND STRATEGIES FOR VETERANS

**Moderator:** *Chris Moore, Teamsters, Airline Division Representation.*

**Speakers:** *Joe Ferreira, Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Airline Division; Marcus Troutman, Director of Continuing Education, Olive-Harvey College; Daniel Bregman, Executive Vice President, Strategy & Development Spartan College of Aeronautics & Technology; Scott Ferris, Director of Tech Ops Hiring Programs, United Airlines; Bettina Mrusek, Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Aeronautics, Embry Riddle*

The aviation industry needs 435,000 new employees over the next few years. Panelists spoke about the education and training programs they offer to facilitate the ability of service members and veterans to attain occupational credentials and well-paid positions in the airline industry.

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters' Airline Division represents members in the airline industry, including mechanics, customer-service agents, reservationists, simulator technicians, ramp agents, stock clerks, dispatch personnel, flight attendants and pilots. They have created unique programs for service members and veterans to facilitate training, attainment of essential occupational certifications, such as the Airframe and Powerplant certification, and placement into life-sustaining jobs. United Airlines Tech Ops program also allows military-connected individuals to participate in apprenticeship programs – earning as much as \$50 to \$60 an hour. At Embry Riddle, service members and veterans are provided convenient, flexible educational services specifically tailored to their unique needs and they can receive college credit for their aviation maintenance experience.

## PORTS AND SUPPLY CHAIN

**Speaker:** *Brian Miller, Deputy Executive Director for the Maryland Port Administration*

Maryland Port Administration (MPA) Executive Director William P. Doyle sits on the Task Force Movement Board and has been a leader in identifying the needs of ports. His deputy, Brian Miller, spoke about the complex supply chain issues that the ports are encountering.

Trucking is the backbone of every port in the United States, and Baltimore is no exception. The MPA oversees the six state-owned, public marine terminals of the Port of Baltimore, and it is one of the busiest ports in the nation – handling more cars/light trucks and heavy roll on/roll off farm and construction machinery than any other port. While the COVID-19 pandemic brought unforeseen impacts to the maritime shipping industry with detrimental effects on the supply chain, the Port of Baltimore did not experience these issues. This is because they have a robust supply chain network built on strong relationships with their customers and partners that operate in the port every day.

# INNOVATIONS IN CREDENTIALING

The American Legion's research and convenings around promoting the education, credentialing and employment of service members and veterans over the past 20 years have been instrumental in breaking down barriers and facilitating opportunities. Several of the 2022 summit sessions furthered the dialogue about innovative solutions to promote credentialing of service members and veterans and presented opportunities for action for stakeholders.

## INNOVATIONS IN CREDENTIALING AND CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING FOR SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

***Moderator:** Susan Acevedo-Moyer, Ed.D., Director of Research & Analysis, SOLID, LLC.*

***Speakers:** Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College; Gardner Carrick, Vice President, The Manufacturing Institute; Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs; Casey Andree, M.Ed., Instructional Designer, Education Design Lab.*

Military service members are the beneficiaries of extensive high-quality training and work experience during their time in service that prepares them to perform successfully in a wide range of occupational specialties. However, due to differences between military and civilian occupational classification systems, it can be difficult for service members and veterans to identify jobs in the civilian workforce that are comparable to their military occupational specialties. Civilian employers also report difficulty translating military job titles to their own job titles. This lack of understanding of the comparability of military and civilian occupations can result in missed civilian employment opportunities for transitioning service members and veterans. The potential lack of recognition of the considerable and broadly applicable training and experience received in the military can have several adverse effects, including:

- Need for veterans to attain potentially duplicative additional skills training (often paid for through government programs) to qualify for civilian jobs.
- Periods of unemployment or underemployment for service members transitioning to the civilian workforce.
- Lack of use of qualified transitioning service members and veterans to fill labor shortages in the civilian workforce.

Prior learning is a term educators use to describe learning that a student acquires outside a traditional academic environment. While recognition of prior learning (RPL) is not a new concept, its significance has grown tremendously over the last few years. RPL can represent many different types of alternative learning, including military training, apprenticeship, certifications/licenses, and any other place where rigorous learning is achieved. Many states, non-profits and other entities have sprung into action. For example, the Education Design Lab partnered with Solution for Information Design and launched an initiative called Xcredit or Experience Credit. The Xcredit project is designing new ways of validating and credentialing informal learning, allowing the user to demonstrate and verify their skills to employers. To earn a micro credential, a learner must demonstrate via a performance-based assessment core competencies. If successfully achieved, the learner is awarded a digital badge.

Another innovative model or best practice can be found at the Manufacturing Institute. The Manufacturing Institute (MI) and Walmart joined forces to grow military employment in the manufacturing industry. They hope to develop a robust pipeline for transitioning service members by provided them recognition for their skills and abilities gained by their time in the service. As a leading expert, SOLID has created formulas or methodologies to translate and verify non-traditional training and learning into skills; MI has retained SOLID to deliver solutions and tools to assist with the training and placement of veterans, MI President Carolyn Lee says. "This partnership with SOLID and JFF will

also enable service members to seek more targeted training options for in-demand skills and allow employers to streamline new-hire training programs based on the abilities that veterans already possess.”

Other examples of recognition for learning can be found nationally from various colleges and state education systems to industry recognized apprenticeship programs. RPL increases student retention, encourages persistence, shortens time to completion, and translates valuable learning experiences into tangible progress toward education and career goals, but they are not the only benefactors; industries and institution can also benefit. For employers, RPL provides another recruitment pipeline or talent marketplace and fulfills workforce demands. The RPL is experiencing a resurgence as many employers, employees, alternative providers, and institutions of higher education work together to document and assess non-classroom learning.

## DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW WORK-BASED LEARNING CREDENTIAL STANDARD

*Moderator: Lisa Lutz, President/CEO, SOLID, LLC*

*Speakers: Roy Swift, PhD, Executive Director, WorkCred; Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College; Elizabeth Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants; Jeremy Sadlier, Executive Director, American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration (ASHHRA)*

Work-based learning provides structured opportunities for skills development within a workplace setting. Common types of work-based learning include internships, residencies, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and training to placement programs. These programs provide individuals with opportunities to develop valuable skills and gain experience relevant to a specific industry, positioning them for career entry and advancement. Work-based learning programs can be particularly beneficial for transitioning service members and veterans who have gained high-quality training and skills through military service but need to learn how to apply these skills in a civilian workplace environment. This was the impetus for congressional authorization for what is now called the DoD SkillBridge program.

Unlike other forms of academic and non-academic post-secondary workforce preparation programs, there is a lack of standardized criteria around the development and structure of work-based learning programs that allow for assessment, evaluation and promotion of consistent and measurable learning outcomes and quality. Without a standard, it is difficult to characterize work-based learning/employer-aligned programs as credentials, and it makes that type of learning less portable as individuals move from job to job because prospective employers cannot determine the types of skills that were previously gained by applicants.

The creation of an American National Standard (ANS) for a work-based learning credential that is developed and validated by industry through a standard process will increase the transparency behind the learning outcomes and skills attained through these programs. National standards currently exist for certificate and certification programs and representatives of ASTM International – the organization that defines and sets these and thousands of other standards – have expressed support for considering the development of a complementary ANS for work-based learning.

Today’s labor shortages demand work-based learning programs that can be stood up quickly but are validated with industry. Creating a work-based learning standard will formalize this important form of workplace preparation as a credential and will increase the number of Americans who hold post-secondary credentials, helping meet our nation’s need for skilled talent.

## DEVELOPING A NATIONAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT RECORD ECOSYSTEM

*Speakers: Deanna Parker, Analyst & Marine Corps COOL Lead, SOLID; Ian Davidson, Chief Growth Officer, SmartResume/iDatafy; Jason Tyszko, Vice President, Center for Education and Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation*

According to a recent report, “A National LER Infrastructure,” the needs of our workforce are moving us toward an economy in which skills are the currency of the future. A Learning and Employment Record (LER) is an individual’s digital record of their learning, training and work experiences, sometimes combined with other digital records, which can be exchanged, understood, and verified to access educational and employment opportunities. A national LER-based infrastructure will revolutionize our outdated credentialing and hiring systems, allowing learners, workers, employers and education providers to exchange verifiable information effortlessly and efficiently about an individual’s discrete learning and employment achievements.

### What is an LER?

- A digital record that documents the user’s learning wherever it occurred, including formal and informal training, as well as experience.
- Linked to each individual user for the purposes of pursuing additional educational, training and professional opportunities.
- Provides transparency on the skills/competencies attained through training and experience.

An LER has the ability to be transferable and recognizable across student (military and non-military) information systems, employer HR systems and military systems.

### What is the T3 Innovation Network and what role does it play in the development of an LER?

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s T3 Innovation Network’s mission is to enable the digital transformation of the talent marketplace by promoting data interoperability and harmonization across diverse stakeholders, including employers, education, training and credentialing providers, government agencies, and technology partners. This digital transformation will ensure that:
  - » All learning counts.
  - » Skills are used like currency.
  - » Learners and workers are empowered with data to pursue education and employment opportunities.
- In 2018, Phase 1 identified data interoperability challenges and developed a roadmap to address them. From 2019 to 2022, Phase 2 implemented the roadmap through eight projects. The T3 “Network of Networks” was launched in 2021 to convene, align and support stakeholders working on core data infrastructure required for the digital transformation of the talent marketplace. The four founding networks include:
  - » Data and Technology Standards (DTS) Network
  - » Open Competency Frameworks (OCF) Network
  - » Learning and Employment Records Network (LERN)
  - » Jobs and Workforce Data (JWD) Network

### Recent LER Developments for the Military User

- The Military LER within the MilGears platform is a digital record made available to the service member and will be cross-compatible with all tools available within MilGears. It is being developed using open data standards in order to also be compatible with external systems.

- The current LER within MilGears primarily focuses on consolidating military-related information including service history, duty stations and assignments, formal and on-the-job training, qualifications, special skills, test scores, awards, TA-funded education, USMAPs, COOL-funded certifications and/or any other learning or achievement that may occur during the scope of a military career. It also allows the user to self-attest to additional information, including education and civilian work experiences to help create a more complete picture of the military user.

#### **Military LER Pilots to Date**

- Accepting service records to populate LER with service-specific information.
  - » Identifying supporting information that needs to be included in the LER to help civilianize military duties, including tasks and skills performed by the service member.
- Identifying data standards to apply and test.
  - » Leveraged IMS Global's CLR standard within the MilGears LER to help support interoperability.
- Began identification of skills to aid in the translation of military-to-civilian work, and in identifying gaps.
  - » Started to identify skills for all Navy enlisted ratings within the MilGears Military LER, and a few sample military occupation codes (MOCs) within the Marine Corps and Army.
  - » Continuing to participate in pilots that allow for the testing of these methods for identifying additional skills across services, to include:
    - Collaboration with Microsoft to create verifiable credentials that can be accepted by external stakeholders.
    - Working with Education Design Lab to test interoperability between systems and give credit to veterans for 21st century skills.
    - Taking part in a project with the Manufacturing Institute and JFF to identify manufacturing skills for service members across branches, leveraging a methodology that can potentially be scaled to support other industries in the future.

# CONCLUSIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

The presentations and discussions at The American Legion National Education and Credentialing Summit that have been summarized in this report point to numerous opportunities for action to further facilitate education, credentialing, and employment of service members and veterans. The table below captures these opportunities by stakeholder group in three broad areas:

1. Trucking Specific
2. Workforce Development and Credentialing
3. Educational and Vocational

| Opportunities for Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Stakeholder Group |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Government        | Military | Industry | Academia/<br>Vocational<br>Training Providers | Veteran Service<br>Organizations | Congress |
| <b>Trucking-Specific Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Dispel misconceptions about truck driving jobs and raise awareness of the fact that these jobs are: (1) varied in type with many opportunities that are not just long haul; (2) high paying with excellent benefits, (3) held by a diverse range of people with various racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.     | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Raise awareness among service members and veterans of the availability of the Military Skills Test Waiver and Military Knowledge Test Waiver Program, which expedites the ability of eligible military truck drivers to attain Commercial Drivers Licenses by providing credit for military training and experience. | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Pursue opportunities through the Department of Transportation’s (DoT) Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training Grant Program to receive funding to assist veterans and military spouses to receive CMV training.                                                                                      | X                 |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| Raise awareness of DoT’s Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program that allows certain 18-, 19- and 20-year-old drivers to operate commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce.                                                                                                                                  | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Become familiar with the Biden-Harris Trucking Action Plan and get involved with the Task Force Movement for Trucking.                                                                                                                                                                                               | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |



| Opportunities for Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Stakeholder Group |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Government        | Military | Industry | Academia/<br>Vocational<br>Training Providers | Veteran Service<br>Organizations | Congress |
| <b>Workforce Development/Credentialing Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Establish apprenticeship programs and take advantage of resources, such as the Department of Labor’s Apprenticeship.gov, which is a one-stop source to connect career seekers, employers and education partners with apprenticeship resources.                                                                                           | X                 |          | X        | X                                             |                                  |          |
| Become a DoD SkillBridge Program partner and sponsor internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities to tap into the expertise of and recruit transitioning service members.                                                                                                                                                             | X                 |          | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Encourage service members and veterans to attain occupational credentials (for service members – promote early in the military life cycle).                                                                                                                                                                                              |                   | X        |          | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Utilize resources, such as DoD’s Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) and MilGears (Powered by COOL) to see how military training and experience aligns with civilian jobs and academic and non-academic credentials.                                                                                                              | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Become familiar with the White House Executive Order on Improving the Nation’s Cybersecurity and become involved with the Task Force Movement on Cybersecurity.                                                                                                                                                                          |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Become involved with the discussion surrounding developing a work-based learning credential standard that would improve the transparency behind skills attained through these programs and help ensure their quality.                                                                                                                    | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |
| Federal and state governments should adopt skills-based hiring practices and explore how to incentivize other employers to model these practices.                                                                                                                                                                                        |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| Human Resources directors should develop a sound understanding of LERs and the positive impact that these can bring to an organization as it shifts focus from degrees that individuals have earned to what individuals know and can do. This can be accomplished by undertaking feasibility studies, needs analyses and pilot projects. | X                 | X        | X        | X                                             | X                                |          |

| Opportunities for Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Stakeholder Group |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Government        | Military | Industry | Academia/<br>Vocational<br>Training Providers | Veteran Service<br>Organizations | Congress |
| <b>Educational/Vocational Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  |          |
| Congress should work to establish a comprehensive data framework for risk-based surveys that protects the privacy of veterans' academic records while providing lawmakers and State Approving Agencies with the critical information needed to operate the risk-based survey framework successfully. (Reference: Lessons from a Risk-Based Oversight Model Designed to Protect Students and Taxpayers)                     |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| Congress should work to raise the monthly housing allowance stipend for veterans enrolled in distant learning full-time to 100% of the BAH national average so that veterans utilizing their GI Bill for online programs maintain the flexibility to pursue their education without impacting their quality of life. (Reference: Opening Doors Online: Access, Accountability and Excellence in Veteran Distance Learning) |                   |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| Institutions across the country should adopt the Veterans Promise modeled at Michigan's Grand Valley State University, which guarantees admission for enlisted high school graduates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| The Department of Veterans Affairs should consider whether additional requirements should be imposed on institutions of higher learning that receive GI Bill benefits and/or participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program so that they are more accountable to their student veteran populations when it comes to informing the student veteran of the GI-Bill payment process.                                                | X                 |          |          |                                               |                                  | X        |
| State Education Systems should adopt legislation requiring public institutions to award military credit for prior learning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | X                 |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| Institutions of higher learning that accept GI Bill funding should ensure their student veteran populations are supported by developing personalized orientation that deals with the specific needs of a veteran non-traditional learner.                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |          |          | X                                             |                                  |          |
| A study should be undertaken to identify ways that students who have earned credit from institutions that are subsequently shut down can have their credits recognized by other schools and receive financial reimbursement for investments made.                                                                                                                                                                          | X                 |          |          |                                               | X                                | X        |
| State Education Systems should craft policy and processes to accept Learner Employer Records following best practices as published by AACRAO.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | X                 |          |          |                                               | X                                | X        |

# APPENDIX A

## The American Legion National Higher Education & Credentialing Summit Agenda Hilton Milwaukee, Wis., City Center

Wednesday, Aug. 31, 2022

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                        |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>7:30-8:25am</b>  | <b>Breakfast</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Empire Ballroom<br/>Lobby Level</b> |
| <b>8:25-8:30am</b>  | <i>EMCEE:</i> Sam Whitehurst, Vice President, Dixon Center for Military & Veterans Services<br><i>Welcome:</i> James LaCoursiere Jr., Chairman, Veterans Employment & Education Commission, The American Legion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Empire Ballroom<br>Lobby Level         |
| <b>8:30-8:45am</b>  | <i>Opening Remarks:</i> Jared Lyon, President & CEO, Student Veterans of America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Empire Ballroom<br>Lobby Level         |
| <b>8:45-9:00am</b>  | <i>Keynote Address:</i> Brandon McPherson, TFM Senior Advisor, Founder Service for Humanity, National Infrastructure Accelerator Alliance<br><i>Video Presentations:</i> Biden-Harris Trucking Plan & Task Force Movement & Welcome Remarks: Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Empire Ballroom<br>Lobby Level         |
| <b>9:00-9:15am</b>  | <i>Opening Remarks on the Biden-Harris Trucking Plan:</i> Honorable Patrick Murphy, Task Force Movement Chairman                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Empire Ballroom<br>Lobby Level         |
| <b>9:15-10:00am</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Biden-Harris Trucking Plan Fireside Chat:</i> Moderator – Brandon McPherson, TFM Senior Advisor, Founder Service for Humanity, National Infrastructure Accelerator Alliance</li> <li>• Honorable Patrick Murphy, Chairman, Task Force Movement</li> <li>• Honorable James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary DoL/VETS</li> <li>• Honorable Shawn Skelly, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, DoD</li> <li>• Harin Contractor, White House National Economic Council</li> <li>• Nikki McDavid, Chief, Commercial Driver’s License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation</li> </ul> | Empire Ballroom<br>Lobby Level         |

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                    |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>10:00-10:30am</b> | <b>Press Conference / Break</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Empire Ballroom Lobby Level</b> |
| <b>10:45-11:30am</b> | <p><i>Biden-Harris Trucking Plan - Task Force Growth Group Panel</i></p> <p>Introduction: Cassie Byard, TFM Executive Director</p> <p>Moderator: Daniel Kunze, TFM Senior Advisor Technology &amp; Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Amico, CEO Jack Cooper Transit</li> <li>• Nick Geale, Vice President for Workforce &amp; Labor, American Trucking Associations</li> <li>• Sam Whitehurst, Vice President, Dixon Center for Military &amp; Veterans Services</li> <li>• Jason Altmire, President/CEO, Career Education Colleges &amp; Universities</li> <li>• Nikki McDavid, Chief, Commercial Driver's License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation</li> </ul> | Empire Ballroom Lobby Level        |
| <b>11:30-11:45am</b> | <i>DoD Career Readiness Portfolio</i> : Honorable Shawn Skelly, Assistant Secretary of Defense, Readiness                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Empire Ballroom Lobby Level        |
| <b>11:45-12:45pm</b> | <b>Lunch</b> – Guest Speaker: Joe Ferreira, Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Airline Division (12:30-12:45pm)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Regency Ballroom 5th Floor         |
| <b>12:45-1:30pm</b>  | <i>Call to Action</i> : Maj. Gen. Johnny Davis, Commanding General, US Army Cadet Command                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Regency Ballroom 5th Floor         |
| <b>1:30-1:45pm</b>   | <b>Break / Transition</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                    |
| <b>1:45-3:00pm</b>   | <b>Concurrent Breakout Sessions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                    |

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                               |
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| <p><b>Breakout Session 1</b></p> | <p><i>DoD's SkillBridge Program &amp; Model Programs in Trucking</i></p> <p>Panel 1 Moderator: Lisa Lutz, President &amp; CEO, SOLID, LLC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gary Schaub, Senior Advisor for Professional Military Education, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel &amp; Readiness</li> <li>• Jerry Elam, Program Manager, Military Partnerships, ABF</li> <li>• Mike Hazard, Training Specialist, Veterans in Piping, United Association of Plumbers &amp; Pipefitters</li> </ul> <p>Panel 2 Moderator: Elizabeth Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kevin Duesterhaus, Illinois Secretary of State, Director of Driver Services</li> <li>• Jafi Roskey, Werner Senior Manager of Military Programs, Apprenticeship Program Manager, Driver Ambassador Manager, U.S. Air Force Veteran</li> <li>• Thomas Serafin, Director of Safety, Training &amp; Military Affairs, Florida Rock &amp; Tank Lines, Inc.</li> <li>• Lindley Davis, Vice President, Human Resources, Jack Cooper, American Trucking Association</li> </ul> | <p>Wright A<br/>4th Floor</p> |
| <p><b>Breakout Session 2</b></p> | <p><i>Education Quality:</i> Moderator - Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military &amp; Veterans Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gokhan Coskun, Executive Director of Yunus Emre Institute (Turkish Educational &amp; Cultural Center Founder of INTED)</li> <li>• Desiree Butts, Executive Director, Strategic Partnerships, Military &amp; VA Programs at National University</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Mitchell<br/>4th Floor</p> |
| <p><b>Breakout Session 3</b></p> | <p><i>Military Spouse Employment:</i> Moderator - Sam Whitehurst, VP Dixon Center for Military &amp; Veterans Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barbara Carson, Managing Director of Programs &amp; Services, D'Aniello Institute for Veterans &amp; Military Families (IVMF)</li> <li>• Cassie Byard, Executive Director of Task Force Movement</li> <li>• Judy Elias, Founder &amp; President Heroes to Heroes</li> <li>• Erica McMannes, Chief People &amp; Community Officer, Instant Teams &amp; MSEP Employer Partner</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Walker<br/>4th Floor</p>   |

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|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Breakout Session 4</b> | <p><i>Innovations in Credentialing &amp; Credit for Prior Learning:</i><br/>Moderator – Susan Acevedo-Moyer, Ed.D., Director of Research &amp; Analysis, SOLID, LLC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College</li> <li>• Gardner Carrick, Vice President, The Manufacturing Institute</li> <li>• Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs</li> <li>• Casey Andree, M.Ed., Instructional Designer, Education Design Lab</li> </ul>                                                                                                                   | Wright C<br>4th Floor |
| <b>3:00-3:15pm</b>        | <b>Break / Transition</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                       |
| <b>3:15-4:30pm</b>        | <b>Concurrent Breakout Sessions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                       |
| <b>Breakout Session 1</b> | <p><i>Credentialing Programs in the Military:</i> Moderator – Deanna Parker, Analyst &amp; Marine Corps COOL Lead, SOLID, LLC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keith Boring, Director, Navy Credentialing Programs, Interservice Credentialing Working Group Chair</li> <li>• Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs</li> <li>• Mike Talley, Director, Navy COOL</li> <li>• Steve Keck, Chief, Career Investment Division, U.S. Coast Guard</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                     | Wright C<br>4th Floor |
| <b>Breakout Session 2</b> | <p><i>Promoting Credentialing &amp; Employment in Healthcare:</i><br/>Moderator - Brent Murphy, John Patrick University of Health &amp; Applied Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katie Purswell, Veterans Affairs &amp; Rehabilitation Division Director, American Legion</li> <li>• Julia Gusse, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs</li> <li>• Terrell Odom, Ed.D., MS-IDT, MBA, Director, Office for Military-Affiliated Communities, University of Chicago</li> <li>• Barry Shore, USA Care Living</li> <li>• Patricia Sandoval, Executive Vice President, Atlas Health Foundation</li> </ul> | Mitchell<br>4th Floor |

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| <b>Breakout Session 3</b> | <p><i>The Commercial Aviation Pilot &amp; Mechanic Shortage &amp; Strategies for Veterans:</i></p> <p>Moderator - Chris Moore, Teamster's Airline Division Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joe Ferreira, Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Airline Division</li> <li>• Marcus Troutman, Director of Continuing Education, Olive-Harvey College</li> <li>• Daniel Bregman, Executive Vice President, Strategy &amp; Development Spartan College of Aeronautics &amp; Technology</li> <li>• Scott Ferris, Director of Tech Ops Hiring Programs, United Airlines</li> <li>• Bettina Mrusek, Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Aeronautics, Embry Riddle</li> </ul> | Wright A<br>4th Floor |
| <b>Breakout Session 4</b> | <p><i>Development of a New Work-Based Learning Credential:</i></p> <p>Moderator - Lisa Lutz,<br/>President &amp; CEO, SOLID, LLC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roy Swift, PhD, Executive Director, WorkCred</li> <li>• Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College</li> <li>• Elizabeth Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants</li> <li>• Jeremy Sadlier, Executive Director, American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration (ASHHRA)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Walker<br>4th Floor   |
| <b>4:45-5:15pm</b>        | <i>Ports &amp; Supply Chain:</i> Brian Miller, Executive Director of the Maryland Port Administration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Wright B<br>4th Floor |
| <b>5:15-7:00pm</b>        | <i>Networking Reception:</i> Special Guests Introduced by Legion Representative                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Wright B<br>4th Floor |

**Thursday, Sept. 1, 2022**

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                        |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>7:15-8:15am</b> | <b>Breakfast</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Empire Ballroom<br/>Lobby Level</b> |
| <b>8:15-8:30am</b> | <p><i>Welcome &amp; Introduction to Morning Keynote:</i> Honorable Patrick Murphy, Task Force Movement Chairman</p> <p><i>Morning Keynote:</i> Honorable James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment &amp; Training Service</p> |                                        |

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|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <p><b>8:30-9:15am</b></p>   | <p><i>Opening Doors Online: Access, Accountability &amp; Excellence in Veteran Distance Learning: Moderator – Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military &amp; Veterans Affairs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Col. Keith A. Casey, U.S. Army (Ret), Director of Veteran Services, Concordia University Wisconsin</li> <li>• Esmeralda Silva, Vice President Student Affairs, Alliant University/President, Council of College &amp; Military Educators (CCME)</li> <li>• Terrell Odom, Ed.D., MS-IDT, MBA,</li> </ul>                                                              | <p>Empire Ballroom Lobby Level</p> |
| <p><b>9:15-10:00am</b></p>  | <p><i>Lessons from a Risk-Based Oversight Model Designed to Protect Students &amp; Taxpayers: Moderator – Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military &amp; Veterans Affairs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garrett FitzGerald, CEO, CollegeRecon</li> <li>• Dan Wellman, Administrator, Illinois State Approving Agency</li> <li>• Julia Gusse, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs</li> <li>• Schnell Carraway, Chief of Strategic Initiatives &amp; Integration, Education Service, Veterans Benefit Administration</li> </ul> | <p>Empire Ballroom Lobby Level</p> |
| <p><b>10:00-10:10am</b></p> | <p><b>Break</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                    |
| <p><b>10:10-10:20am</b></p> | <p><i>Keynote: Eric Eversole, Vice President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce &amp; President of Hiring Our Heroes</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Empire Ballroom Lobby Level</p> |
| <p><b>10:20-11:00</b></p>   | <p><i>Student Veteran Panel: Moderator – Lauren Augustine, Vice President of Government Affairs, Student Veterans of America</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Josh Jones, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago</li> <li>• Colin Andersen, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago</li> <li>• Olivia Rodriguez, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago</li> <li>• Carly Fournier, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago</li> <li>• Alex Pirila, Chapter Advisor, Loyola University Chicago</li> </ul>                                                                                                       | <p>Empire Ballroom Lobby Level</p> |
| <p><b>11:00-11:40</b></p>   | <p><b>MilGears Powered by COOL</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                    |



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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>11:40-12:15</b>                   | <b>Development of a New Work-based Learning Credential</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Empire Ballroom<br>Lobby Level |
| <b>12:15-1:15pm</b>                  | <b>Lunch</b> – <i>Guest Speaker:</i> DeAndre Jones, EdD, Acting Chief of Staff, Office of Career, Technical, & Adult Education, US Department of Education (1-1:15pm)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                |
| <b>1:15-1:30pm</b>                   | <i>Call to Action:</i> Sgt. 1st Class Olajide Gamu, U.S. Army, Deputy Director, Soldier For Life – Midwest Region                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                |
| <b>1:30-1:45pm</b>                   | <b>Break / Transition</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                |
| <b>1:45-3:00pm</b>                   | <b>Concurrent Breakout Sessions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                |
| <b>Session 3</b><br><b>1:45-2:30</b> | <p><i>Education &amp; Employment Programs &amp; Initiatives:</i><br/>Moderator – Esmeralda Silva, Vice President Student Affairs, Alliant University/President, Council of College &amp; Military Educators (CCME)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Col. Adam Rocke, Senior Director, Hiring Our Heroes Foundation</li> <li>• Michael Bianchi, Senior Director, Education &amp; Career Training, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans &amp; Military Families (IVMF)</li> <li>• Schnell Carraway, Chief of Strategic Initiatives &amp; Integration, Education Service, Veterans Benefit Administration</li> </ul> |                                |
| <b>Session 4</b><br><b>2:30-3:15</b> | <p><i>Developing A National Learning &amp; Employment Record Ecosystem</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jason Tyszko, Vice President, Center for Education &amp; Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation</li> <li>• Ian Davidson, Chief Growth Officer, SmartResume</li> <li>• Deanna Parker, Analyst &amp; Marine Corps COOL Lead, SOLID, LLC.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                |

# APPENDIX B

## The American Legion National Higher Education & Credentialing Summit Concurrent Session Schedule & Session Descriptions

### Concurrent Session Schedule Day 1 – August 31st

| Time                | Session                                                                                | Location            |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>1:45-3:00 pm</b> | Session 1: DoD’s SkillBridge Program and Model Programs in Trucking                    | Wright A, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 2: Education Quality                                                           | Mitchell, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 3: Military Spouse Employment Panel                                            | Walker, 4th Floor   |
|                     | Session 4: Innovations in Credentialing & Credit for Prior Learning                    | Wright C, 4th Floor |
| <b>3:15-4:30 pm</b> | Session 1: Credentialing Programs in the Military                                      | Wright C, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 2: Promoting Credentialing & Employment in Healthcare                          | Mitchell, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 3: The Commercial Aviation Pilot & Mechanic Shortage & Strategies for Veterans | Wright A, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 4: Development of a New Work-based Learning Credential                         | Walker, 4th Floor   |

### Day 2 – September 1st

| Time                | Session                                                                 | Location            |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>1:45-3:00 pm</b> | Session 1: Development of a New Work-based Learning Credential          | Walker, 4th Floor   |
|                     | Session 2: MilGears – Powered by COOL                                   | Mitchell, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 3: Education & Employment Programs & Initiatives                | Wright A, 4th Floor |
|                     | Session 4: Developing A National Learning & Employment Record Ecosystem | Wright C, 4th Floor |

## Concurrent Session Descriptions

### Credentialing Programs in the Military

**Day 1:** Aug. 31

**Time:** 3 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

**Location:** Wright Ballroom, Section C, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** Service member participation in the services' credentialing programs (Credentialing Opportunities On-Line), which allow for payment of industry-recognized credentials, and the United Service Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP) continues to grow – especially with the recent addition of the Army and Air Force to USMAP. Learn about these programs, their funding, how they have expanded and how they complement other education and credentialing initiatives.

**Moderator:** Deanna Parker, Analyst/Marine Corps COOL Lead, SOLID, LL

**Panel Membership:**

- Keith Boring, Director, Navy Credentialing Programs
- Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs
- Mike Talley, Director, Navy COOL
- Steve Keck, Chief, Career Investment Division, U.S. Coast Guard

### Developing a National Learning and Employment Record Ecosystem

**Day 2:** Sept, 1

**Time:** 1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

**Location:** Wright Ballroom, Section C, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** According to a recent report, “A National LER Infrastructure,” the needs of our workforce are moving us toward an economy in which “skills are the currency of the future” (Estrada, 2020). A Learning and Employment Record (LER) is an individual’s digital record of learning, training, and work experiences, sometimes combined with other digital records, and exchanged, understood, and verified to access educational and employment opportunities. A national Learning and Employment Record ecosystem will revolutionize our outdated credentialing and hiring systems. This new LER based infrastructure will allow learners, workers, employers, and education providers to exchange verifiable information effortlessly and efficiently about an individual’s discrete learning and employment achievements. Please join our panel experts to learn more about LERs, the infrastructure that supports them and what it means for the credentialing ecosystem.

**Presenters:**

- Jason Tyszko, Vice President, Center for Education and Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- Ian Davidson, Chief Growth Officer, SmartResume
- Deanna Parker, Analyst & Marine Corps COOL Lead, SOLID, LLC

## Development of a New Work-based Learning Credential

**Day 1:** Aug. 31

**Time:** 3 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

**Day 2:** Sept. 1

**Time:** 1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes (Day 1 and Day 2)

**Location:** Walker, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** Work-based learning provides structured opportunities for skills development within a workplace setting. Common types of work-based learning include internships, residencies, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and training to placement programs. These programs provide individuals with opportunities to develop valuable skills and gain experience relevant to a specific industry positioning them for career entry and advancement. Work-based learning programs can be particularly beneficial for transitioning service members and veterans who have gained high-quality training and skills through military service but need to learn how to apply these skills in a civilian workplace environment. This was the impetus for Congressional authorization for what is now called the DoD SkillBridge program. This session will explore the value of work-based learning programs and the need for the development of an American National Standard to ensure the quality, reliability, and consistency of these programs.

**Moderator:** Lisa Lutz, President/CEO, SOLID

### Panel Members:

- Roy Swift, PhD, Executive Director, WorkCred
- Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College
- Elizabeth Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants
- Jeremy Sadlier, Executive Director, American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration (ASHHRA)

## DoD's SkillBridge Program & Model Programs in Trucking

**Day 1:** Aug. 31

**Time:** 1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

**Location:** Wright Ballroom, Section A, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** The DoD SkillBridge (also called “Career Skills”) program is an opportunity for service members and military spouses to gain valuable civilian work experience during their last 180 days of service through specific industry training, apprenticeships, or internships. Unlike other veteran development or education programs, participation occurs while the service member is still on active duty. Companies and education/training providers often use SkillBridge to partner together and create pipeline programs to fill emerging and/or high demand career opportunities. This session will provide information about the program and highlight select successful programs, including some of the groundbreaking first SkillBridge programs and model programs in trucking.

**Moderator:** Panel 1: Lisa Lutz, President/CEO, SOLID, LLC

Panel 2: Elizabeth Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants

### **Panel Members:**

- Panel 1:
  - » Gary Schaub, Senior Advisor for Professional Military Education, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness
  - » Jerry Elam, Program Manager, Military Partnerships, ABF
  - » Mike Hazard, Training Specialist, Veterans in Piping, United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters
- Panel 2:
  - » Kevin Duesterhaus, Director Driver Services, Office of the Illinois Secretary of State
  - » Jafi Roskey, Senior Manager of Military Programs, Werner Enterprises, Apprenticeship Program Manager, Driver Ambassador Manager, veteran, U.S. Air Force
  - » Tom Serafin, Florida Rock and Tank Lines
  - » Lindley Davis, Human Resources Manager at Jack Cooper, American Trucking Association

### **Education and Employment Programs and Initiatives**

**Day 2:** Sept. 1

**Time:** 1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

**Location:** Wright Ballroom, Section A, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** This session will explore best practices and key strategic initiatives to help ensure successful outcomes for servicemembers, veterans and their families. Learn how industry, academia and government must align and clearly define key expectations to support success outcomes in education that lead to sustainable employment.

**Moderator:** Esmeralda Silva, Vice President Student Affairs, Alliant University/President, Council of College and Military Educators (CCME)

#### **Panel Membership:**

- Col. Adam Rocke, Senior Director, Hiring Our Heroes Foundation
- Michael Bianchi, Senior Director, Education and Career Training, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF)
- Schnell Carraway, Chief of Strategic Initiatives and Integration, Education Service, Veterans Benefit Administration

### **Ensuring the Quality of Educational Opportunities for Service Members and Veterans**

**Day 1:** Aug. 31

**Time:** 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

**Location:** Mitchell, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** Service members and veterans deservedly have access to significant financial assistance to pursue educational opportunities both in-service and post-service. These educational benefits facilitate their ability to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities that might have been out of their reach if it wasn’t for their military service. There is a significant

need, however, to ensure that the investments they make in their time and their limited educational benefits are towards high quality programs that will yield workforce advantages. This session will explore some of the measures that are being taken to ensure service members and veterans receive high quality educational opportunities.

**Moderator:** Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, North Carolina Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

**Panel Members:**

- Gokhan Coskun, Executive Director of Yunus Emre Institute (Turkish Educational and Cultural Center Founder of INTED)
- Desiree Butts, Executive Director, Strategic Partnerships, Military & VA Programs at National University

**Innovations in Credentialing and Credit for Prior Learning for Academic and Non-Academic Credentials**

**Day 1:** Aug. 31

**Time:** 1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Location:** Wright Ballroom, Section C, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** Academia, employers, training providers and others continue to see the value and growing demand of innovative and alternative short- and long-term credentials. This session will introduce initiatives underway to encourage the adoption of all learning counts, such as the validation of soft/human skills, creating badges that account for partial skill attainment towards a credential, credit for prior learning, and the development of training programs that allow an individual to receive on-the-job training and academic credit simultaneously.

**Moderator:** Susan Acevedo-Moyer, Ed.D, Director of Research and Analysis, SOLID

**Panel Membership:**

- Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College
- Gardner Carrick, Vice President, The Manufacturing Institute
- Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs
- Casey Andree, M.Ed., Instructional Designer, Education Design Lab

**MilGears: Powered by COOL**

**Day 2:** Sept. 1

**Time:** 1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

**Location:** Mitchell, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** MilGears is a web-based application powered by the Services' Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) platforms that service members, veterans, and other stakeholders can use for career guidance, planning, and decision making. Initially, developed by the Navy, this robust career exploration tool has now expanded to all services. Learn how service members and veterans can use MilGears to identify career pathways for both in-service skills attainment and eventual post-service employment simply by uploading their formal documentation of their military service records. See how credential providers, employers, and others can use the resulting output to assess the service member's or veteran's skills.

**Panel Members:**

- Keith Boring, Director, Navy Credentialing Programs, Interservice Credentialing Working Group Chair
- Susan Acevedo-Moyer, Ed.D, Director of Research and Analysis, SOLID, LLC
- Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs
- Command Master Chief Edward Lewis, Force Readiness Command, U.S. Coast Guard

**Military Spouse Employment****Day 1:** Aug. 31**Time:** 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.**Total Time:** 75 minutes**Location:** Walker, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** There are hundreds of thousands of military spouses who have committed to supporting their partners during their military service. These spouses face unique credentialing, employment, and entrepreneurship challenges due to their frequent moves. We also tend to view military spouses through the same lens as service members and veterans and fail to take into account their unique differences and challenges. Learn about these challenges and about programs and opportunities to alleviate them.

**Moderator:** Sam Whitehurst, VP Dixon Center for Military and Veterans Services**Panel Members:**

- Barbara Carson, Managing Director of Programs and Services, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF)
- Cassie Gabelt Byard, Executive Director of Task Force Movement and Military Spouse J.D. Network
- Judy Elias, Founder and President, Heroes to Heroes
- Erica McMannes, Chief People and Community Officer and Founder, Instant Teams & MSEP Employer Partner

**Promoting Credentialing and Employment in Healthcare****Day 1:** Aug. 31**Time:** 3 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.**Total Time:** 75 minutes**Location:** Mitchell, 4th Floor

**Summary of Session:** Health care in the United States and abroad are experiencing staffing shortages in nearly every medical discipline. This creates an excellent opportunity for service members, veterans and their families to fill these voids in both vocational and professional service lines. What barriers are preventing this from happening? The complexity of navigating the pathway for credentialing in the allied health care specialties has in many cases paralyzed these opportunities and subsequently gaining meaningful employment in the healthcare professions. This session will focus on: Identifying the current situation and the barriers that exist, identifying current resources, identifying potential solutions and the stakeholders that can influence these actions, examples on how to navigate and overcome these barriers, and establishing meaningful action items to continue this initiative forward.

**Moderator:** Brent Murphy, John Patrick University of Health and Applied Sciences

**Panel Members:**

- Katie Purswell, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director, The American Legion
- Julia Gusse, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Terrell Odom, Ed.D., MS-IDT, MBA, Director, Office for Military-Affiliated Communities, University of Chicago
- Barry Shore, USA Care Living
- Patricia Sandoval, Executive Vice President, Atlas Health Foundation

**The Commercial Aviation Pilot and Mechanic Shortage & Strategies for Veterans****Day 1:** Aug. 31**Time:** 3 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.**Total Time:** 75 minutes**Location:** Wright Ballroom, Section A, 4th Floor

Summary of Session: We have for years been talking about the looming Pilot and Technician shortage in Commercial Aviation. We are now, in the post COVID era, realizing just how serious it is. Flight schedule reductions, delays and cancellations have become the norm that in the short term will only get worse. The good news is that the industry is responding in a number of ways that will begin to refill the pipeline and in doing so create numerous pathways for our veterans to begin a career in the industry. We are here today to talk with our panel of experts about how each of their organizations representing labor, airlines and educators are creating programs and partnerships to accomplish the mission.

**Moderator:** Chris Moore, Teamsters Airline Division Representative**Panel Membership:**

- Joe Ferreira, Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Airline Division
- Marcus Troutman, Director of Continuing Education, Olive-Harvey College
- Daniel Bregman, Executive Vice President, Strategy and Development Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology
- Scott Ferris, Director of Tech Ops Hiring Programs, United Airlines
- Bettina Mrusek, Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Aeronautics, Embry Riddle



# APPENDIX C

## The American Legion National Higher Education & Credentialing Summit Speaker Bios



### **Honorable Patrick Murphy, Task Force Movement Chairman**

Secretary Murphy led the U.S. Army – a Fortune 2-sized workforce with 1.3 million employees and the most millennial and Gen Z employees in the nation, operating on a \$148 billion budget. He was instrumental in achieving Army recruiting goals for the first time in five years, recruiting 120,000 Gen Z troops in 2016. He also led the expansion of the Soldier for Life initiative and generated over \$250 million in public-private partnerships. To better connect the Pentagon to the 20 million veterans, he initiated opening over 2,500 AAFES retail stores for the first- ever, tax-free online shopping which increased annual sales to over \$6.7 billion.

In 2007, Murphy became the nation’s first Iraq War veteran elected to Congress, representing Pennsylvania. He authored several groundbreaking pieces of legislation into law including the 21st Century GI Bill, the Repeal of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, and Affordable Healthcare Act. He currently serves as a commissioner on the U.S. Cyberspace Solarium Commission and as Distinguished Chair of Innovation at West Point. Before transitioning into civilian life, Murphy was an All-American paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division where he served on two combat deployments and earned the Bronze Star for service.

Patrick is a co-founder of WorkMerk, a winning habits tech company focused on employee engagement (\$50m+ valuation), as well as founding board member of Psych Hub, the world’s most comprehensive online educational platform on mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention (\$50m+ valuation).

Patrick is founder of Taking the Hill LLC, a Clio & Sherwood Award-winning television and film company specializing in bringing life to military veteran content. His films include Cherry (2021), The Warrior Class (2020), and Thank You For Your Service (2017). He published the book “Taking the Hill” and has been a television host and contributor for NBC News and CBS Sports.

Besides being a vetrepreneur himself, Patrick is a general partner at the Stony Lonesome Group, a venture capital firm which has invested over \$12 million in 26 veteran-owned businesses in health care, cyber and big data.

An ambassador for the U.S. Chamber Commerce, Secretary Murphy is passionate about corporate culture, grit and servant leadership. An authority on vetrepreneurship and cybersecurity, Patrick speaks to Fortune 500 companies and has personally consulted for the CEOs of CrossFit, Spartan Race and other national platforms committed to elite physical and mental health.

Secretary Murphy serves on a number of corporate, privately held, and non-profit boards, including: Chairman, Cerner Federal (\$5.7 billion/yr); Director, BAE Systems (\$11.4 billion/yr); Director, Adobe Federal (11.1 billion/yr); and Director, Homes For Our Heroes (\$26.1 million/yr).



### **Honorable James Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans’ Employment & Training Service**

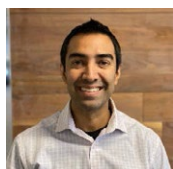
The Honorable James D. Rodriguez, MA, is the U.S. Department of Labor’s Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS). He is responsible for preparing America’s veterans, service members and their spouses for meaningful careers. In this capacity and in Fiscal Year 2021, over

2,800 DoL Veterans' Employment and Training Service staff, contractors, and grantees served more than 331,000 veterans and military spouses across all Agency programs.

Rodriguez is an executive leader and proud veteran with more than 30 years of experience in the U.S. government, corporate sector, and 21 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He possesses a comprehensive background in program management, interagency collaboration, and policy development. He also has extensive senior-level experience building and managing multi-million-dollar budgets and large diverse teams while meeting the expectations of the President of the United States and large corporate enterprises. Additionally, he has demonstrated experience with developing and leading large scale international and national programs with a commitment to operational excellence, risk management and quality assurance.

Rodriguez's recent executive experience includes leadership roles within Deloitte LLP's Government and Public Sector practice and BAE Systems, Inc. Government Relations department. He also previously served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Office of Warrior Care Policy, Office of the Secretary of Defense from 2014 through 2017.

Rodriguez earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Maryland, University College and a Master of Arts in International Commerce and Policy from the George Mason University, School of Public Policy. He also serves as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Government and Political Science in the University of Maryland, Global Campus.



**Harin Contractor, White House National Economic Council**

Harin is the workforce lead and a Senior Policy Advisor at the National Economic Council at the White House. He previously served in the Obama Administration at the U.S. Department of Labor as the Economic Policy Advisor to the Secretary and was former Workforce Policy Director at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, America's Black Think Tank. Harin is a graduate of the University of Georgia and the University of Chicago.



**Nikki McDavid, Chief, Commercial Driver's License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation**

Nicole "Nikki" McDavid is the Chief of the Commercial Driver's License Division at the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. She is responsible for improving highway safety by ensuring that drivers of large trucks and buses are qualified to operate those vehicles and by removing unsafe and unqualified drivers from the highways. Her office does this by developing, administering, and implementing policies, standards, procedures, and guidelines for the National CDL Program.

Nikki holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Maryland Baltimore County and was awarded her Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in Management from the University of Maryland.



**Chris Moore, International Representative, Teamsters Airline Division President, The Aviation Mechanics Coalition**

Chris Moore is an A & P mechanic with over 35 years airline experience and has been a tireless advocate for Aviation and Workplace Safety. Since the formation of the TAMC his mission has been to promote the craft and the intrinsic value of A & P and related workers to the critical nature of all aviation maintenance.

Also, as an international representative for the Teamsters Airline Division, he has responsibilities for negotiating and administering mechanic contracts as well as overseeing safety programs such as ASAP and TSAP and coordination the Division's License Protection Program.

He is also deeply involved with industry coalitions seeking to find solutions to the current pilot and mechanic shortages.



**Sarah Amico, CEO, Jack Cooper Transit**

Sarah Amico is the Executive Chairperson of Jack Cooper Holdings Corp., North America’s largest car haul company and a WBENC-certified Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE). As Executive Chairperson, Amico oversees the Company’s Board, Strategy, Mergers & Acquisitions, and Human Capital Development. Prior to her appointment by the Board as Executive Chairperson, Amico served as Vice Chairman of the Board. She has been a director since 2011 and serves on the Board’s Nominating and Governance Committee. Prior to joining Jack Cooper, Amico worked as the Head of Strategic Planning at APA Talent and Literary Agency in Beverly Hills, where she also launched and led the company’s Entertainment Marketing & Brand Integration Department. During this time, she secured multi-party agreements amongst top content creators, marquis talent, large content distributors, and leading brands. Amico began her tenure in media at the William Morris Agency in both Beverly Hills and New York across a variety of departments, including The Mailroom Fund, a seed capital fund raised in partnership with AT&T, Venrock and Accel Partners. During her time in the entertainment industry, Amico worked on initiatives for some of the world’s largest and most recognizable brands, including Time Inc., Reader’s Digest, Amtrak, Harry & David, and Virgin America Airlines. Amico received her B.A. in politics, magna cum laude, from Washington & Lee University and her M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.

**Jason Altmire, President/CEO, Career Education Colleges & Universities**

Dr. Jason Altmire is president and CEO of Career Education Colleges and Universities (CECU), the national trade association representing private postsecondary career schools. CECU has several member schools with truck driving programs, and overall, the proprietary sector of higher education produces more than half of the nation’s truck drivers. From 2007 to 2013, Altmire served three terms in the United States House of Representatives, where he was a leader on issues related to veterans. Altmire’s 2011 bill to modernize the charter of the American Legion gained 434 cosponsors – the most of any bill in American history. In all, he saw 29 of his legislative initiatives become law, 9 of which were directly related to veterans. He was given a special recognition award at the 2011 Washington Conference of the American Legion and was also named the 2008 national legislator of the year by the National Military Families Association.

**Joe Ferreira, Director, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Airline Division**



Joseph J. Ferreira is currently serving in the capacity as the Director of the Airline Division for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters covering the United States and Guam.

His aviation career began by serving in the U.S. Army from 1976 through 1980 his first aviation job on UH-1H (Bell 205) helicopters. He received an honorable discharge along with the Army Commendation Medal. In 1980, he also completed his Airframe and Powerplant license from Piedmont Aerospace Institute and went on to work in Saudi Arabia for Agusta International in Taif, and Saudi Airlines in Jeddah, as an inspection supervisor until 1985. Ferreira’s career with Continental Airlines began in 1985 serving as an aircraft maintenance manager at Newark International Airport for People’s Express. Subsequently, with the merger of People Express and Continental Airlines, Ferreira transferred from Newark to Houston and filled many critical roles in Maintenance Control until 1999. As manager, he successfully guided Continental’s Tech Ops department

efforts to comply with the FAA imposed time limits on aircraft MELs. As Director of Maintenance Control, he tasked his departments with the responsibility of troubleshooting and coordinating repairs for aircraft recovery throughout the Continental system. In 1999, Ferreira was promoted to Senior Director of Newark International Airport and Northeastern Region for Technical Operations and was transferred to Houston in April 2001 as Senior Director for Technical Operations Houston and South-Central Region.

Ferreira was promoted to Vice President of Technical Operations in October 2003, responsibilities included heavy maintenance checks on the following aircraft: 727, 737, 757, 767, 777, DC10, DC9, MD80 and A300. Other areas of responsibility included Line Maintenance, Ground Support Equipment, Facilities and Warehousing.

In 2010 Continental merged with United Airlines and Ferreira was named as VP of Technical Operations and DOM (Director of Maintenance for the combined airlines. The scope was the same but much bigger with a fleet of 750 airplanes and eight thousand employees worldwide. Ferreira retired in January 2015.

He remained heavily involved in the aviation Industry from 2015 to 2022 as an Aviation Consultant Principle of Ferreira Aviation where he consulted for several aviation companies, including Frontier Airlines, GE Aviation Services, and Supplier Management Solutions, Inc.

**Barbara Carson, Managing Director of Programs & Services, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans & Military Families (IVMF)**



Barbara E. Carson is Managing Director of Programs and Services at the D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) and brings more than 25 years of experience, military service, and proven leadership in successfully building and delivering programs across government and military sectors. Carson is responsible for the day-to-day management and oversight of the Institute’s national programs and services, which focus on entrepreneurship, career training, and community services.

Carson retired as a colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve (USAFR), her last assignment was to the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Office of Public Affairs. She has served more than 25 years as an active-duty and reserve officer, and her experience includes nuclear command and control and public affairs assignments across the United States, Japan and Europe.

Prior to joining the IVMF, Carson spent nearly a decade in leadership at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) most recently serving as the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Disaster Assistance. There, she was responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating the SBA’s disaster loan program throughout the nation. Also at the SBA, Carson served as Deputy Associate Administrator for Government Contracting and Business Development where she advocated to increase small business contracting opportunities in federal agencies and led SBA federal procurement programs including 8(a), HUBZone, Woman-Owned Small Business, and All Small Mentor Protégé programs. Carson has also served as the SBA’s Associate Administrator for the Office of Veterans Business Development, where her military background was an asset to the program.

Carson received her Master of Science in Management from Lesley University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Iowa.

**Amy Mackenroth, Senior Managing Director of Workforce Development, Dallas College**

Mackenroth brings 16 years of management experience and proven leadership skills in the higher education, workforce development, and the health-care industry where she has led major projects as key personnel. Mackenroth’s history of notable work gives her an



exceptional background for understanding the unique needs and special process requirements to successfully lead teams and projects focused on innovative training, mentoring, learning, and development of competency-based career pathways and workforce development initiatives. At Dallas College, she is the current director of national scaling for the DoL You're Hired Scaling Apprenticeship grant wherein she leads a team to develop apprenticeship programs in health care and launch them around the United States. She is also the project director for a DoL One Workforce grant, targeting the IT, transportation, and advanced manufacturing sectors. She is responsible for strategic planning, overall project development, national scaling, and stakeholder engagement. Mackenroth holds a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Communication from the University of Utah, a Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration from New York University and is a Certified ScrumMaster®.

**Casey Andree, M.Ed., Instructional Designer, Education Design Lab**

Andree brings over a decade in education and competency-based learning expertise to the Education Design Lab, where he's working on the XCredit project. The project aims to turn lived experience and skills into workplace currency and digital badges to help unemployed and underemployed people find better paying jobs. He lives in Denver, Colo., with his girlfriend and dog.



**Keith Boring, Director, Navy Credentialing Programs, Interservice Credentialing Working Group Chair**

Boring reported to Center for Information Warfare Training (CIWT) Pensacola Florida in January 2005, while still on active duty (Master Chief). Upon transfer to the Fleet Reserve in 2006, Boring continued his work at the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) as a Navy Civil Service civilian. He currently serves as NETC N54 - Director for the Navy's Credentialing Programs - Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL), United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP), and MilGears.



Boring is a native of Clinton, Tenn. He enlisted in the Navy as a cryptologic technician in 1985 and was advanced to the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer in 2003. He has a degree in Industrial Business Management, is a Microsoft Certified Professional, CompTIA Certified A+, Network+ and Security+ Technician, and is a Certified Project Coordinator. He is also credentialed by the U.S. Department of Labor, under the United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP), as an Information Systems Operator and Radio Station Operator.

Boring has been stationed at various duty stations in positions of increased responsibility. Duty assignments included: Naval Special Warfare Development Group (NSWDG), Naval Security Group Activity (NSGA) Edzell Scotland, NSGA Homestead, Naval Technical Training Center Corry Station, Staff of Commander Seventh Fleet embarked on board USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19), Navy Recruiting District Nashville, Tenn., NSGA Pensacola, CIWT Pensacola, and finally NETC Pensacola.

Boring's role as Director for the Navy's Credentialing Programs includes daily operation of the Navy COOL, USMAP, and MilGears programs, participation in White House and DoD credentialing task forces, DoD CIO and DoN CIO Cybersecurity workgroups, facilitating the DoD's Inter-Service Credentialing Working Group (iCOOL), representing the DoD within various credentialing agency advisory boards, as well as other tasks associated with Navy and civilian credentialing.

### **Tom Phillips, Director, United Services Military Apprenticeship Programs**

Phillips is the Director of the United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP). USMAP is a DOL registered Apprenticeship Program currently serving Active-Duty Members of the Army, Coast Guard, Marines and Navy.

Prior to his current position he served as a Skills Analyst for the 5 Vector Model and Personnel Qualifications Standards (PQS) Manager at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training (CNATT) in Pensacola, Fla. He was a counselor with the Navy College Program Office in Pensacola.

Phillips has been stationed at various duty stations in positions of increased responsibility during his 21 years of active service with the Navy. Duty assignments included: National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) Bethesda, Md., Naval Hospital Charleston, S.C., Naval Regional Medical Center Okinawa, Japan, Naval Hospital Pensacola, Fla., USS Guam (LPD-9), Naval Medical Clinic Annapolis, Md., Marine Forces Pacific and MARCENT Camp Smith, Hawaii, Naval Hospital Cherry Point, N.C., Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Washington, D.C. Assigned first as a hospital corpsman, then as a Medical Service Corps Officer, his service included a myriad of positions from Ward Corpsman, Leading Petty Officer, Leading Chief for a Fleet Surgical Team, Department Head, Plans and Operational Intelligence, and Deputy Director of Operational Readiness Training at BUMED. His military assignments were as varied from changing bedpans, drafting war plans, to briefing flag officers

He worked in private industry prior to joining the Navy: inventory control, counter sales, light machine work, building deconstruction, service station attendant (pumped the gas and checked the oil) gas at that time was 23 cents a gallon.

Phillips holds a General Studies Associate degree from the University of Maryland, a bachelor's degree from Troy University in Resource Management and a master's degree from the University of West Florida in Educational Leadership. He is a native of Apopka, Fla. He and his wife Sherry have five children and five grandchildren.

### **Mike Talley, Director, Navy COOL**

Talley served as a hospital corpsman in the Navy, retiring after 20 years of service. After transition, Mike held various customer support and managerial positions with AT&T, and Gap Inc., before returning to the U.S. Navy as a civilian employee. Today, he is at the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) as a Navy Civil Service civilian. He currently serves as the Director of the Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) program for the Navy's Credentialing Programs Office.

Talley is a native of the New Orleans area of Louisiana. He enlisted in the Navy as a Hospital Corpsman in 1984. He holds a Bachelor's in Workforce Education and Development from Southern Illinois University, several dive-related certifications, and is also a Certified Project Coordinator.

Talley has been stationed at various duty stations in positions of increased responsibility. Duty assignments included: Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Naval Aviation Medical Institute (NAMI), 3rd MAW Iwakuni Japan, then back to NAMI as the APT School Lead, and finally NETC Pensacola.

Talley's role as Director for the Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) program includes daily operations and supervision of six GS analysts and the GBSI contract staff, supporting the Navy COOL program. Additionally, he has been instrumental in the stand-up of USMC COOL and continues to support the program and staff. Talley participates in White House and DoD credentialing task forces, DoD CIO and DoN CIO Cybersecurity work groups, facilitating Navy Job Duty Task Analysis (JDTA), participates in various credentialing agency advisory boards, as well as other tasks associated with Navy and civilian credentialing.

**Daniel Bregman, Executive Vice President, Strategy & Development  
Spartan College of Aeronautics & Technology**

Dan Bregman’s career began in aerospace as an engineer for Rockwell International’s North American Aircraft Division. After earning his MBA, Bregman entered the FMCG industry which culminated in relocating his family to Sao Paulo, Brazil, for five years, to start up the Latin America division of a major food brokerage company. Subsequently, he relocated back to the United States to begin a 15-year career as a senior executive in higher education launching a U.K.-based online university and ultimately led four international online higher education university partnerships. He came to Spartan in December of 2020 as Executive Vice President of Strategy and Development to drive pilot and technician growth through innovative industry alliances.

He resides in Glenwood, Md., with his wife Robin and three grown children, Josh, Miriam, and Rebecca. His interests include SCUBA, international travel, and performing music in local clubs.

**Lisa Lutz, President & CEO, SOLID, LLC.**

Lisa Lutz is President and CEO of SOLID, LLC. She has over 20 years of experience in policy analysis and program evaluation, specializing in education, employment and training issues related to military service members and veterans. Her work has concentrated on the use of occupational credentialing to promote the professional development of service members and ensure their smooth transition from the military to the civilian workforce. She has performed research, provided policy guidance, and developed programs in this area for numerous private and public organizations, including the U.S. Departments of Defense, Labor, Army, Navy, Air Force, Homeland Security, Energy, and Transportation, at the federal level. She has also worked with numerous state and private sector organizations, including the Lumina Foundation, National Governors Association, the Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit, the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning, and Indiana’s Commission for Higher Education.



Lutz’s expertise has led to appointments to advisory committees by four Secretaries of Veterans Affairs to provide subject matter expertise on the implementation of education and credentialing benefits for service members and veterans. She has served as vice chair of the American National Standard’s Institute’s (ANSI) National Accreditation Board (ANAB) Personnel Certification Accreditation Committee (PCAC), which is responsible for overseeing the quality of certification programs, and she continues to serve as a member of that committee. She is also a long-term member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) government affairs committee.

**Elizabeth Murray-Belcaster, CEO, EMB Consultants, Inc.**

Elizabeth Murray-Belcaster is the President of EMB Consultants, Inc. Leading initiatives for Veterans’ and military families, Belcaster is an expert in strategic development of training to placement efforts across the country and an advisor for leadership and coalition building. She is responsible for networking with employers, military partners, and legislators as well as building independent partnerships with labor affiliates and with veterans service organizations across the country. She served as Task Force Committee member and lead panelist for The American Legion’s National Licensing and Credentialing Summits and continues to drive industry stakeholders, governing agencies, labor unions and military affiliations in collective spaces to further advance programming and policy for service members across the globe. Belcaster specializes in development of Military Training to Placement efforts with military leadership, industry, labor, academia and regulatory agencies and stakeholders across the country. She’s

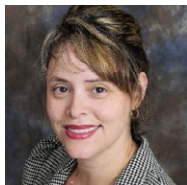


had concurrent experience directing political campaign initiatives for the offices of Governor, State and National Congress, Senate, Aldermanic and regional judicial positions.

She has presented at the Clinton Global Initiative and has served as a board member on the Women For Wounded Warriors Foundation since 2016, and is a past recipient of United States Field Artillery Association's The Order of Saint Barbara award.

**Susan Acevedo-Moyer, Ed.D., Director of Research & Analysis, SOLID, LLC.**

Dr. Susan Acevedo-Moyer has served 20 years in the higher education industry supporting multitude of areas such as academic affairs, student support services and workforce development.



As a spouse of a U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Major, she has dedicated her professional career to assisting post-traditional students, adult learners, and military-related students obtain a higher education credential. She has been instrumental in expanding the range of alternative educational experiences eligible for college credit and led the execution of several platform solutions allowing learners to accelerate educational attainment and obtain career opportunities.

She serves on various state and national boards, including the Online Virginia Network Authority and Virginia Governor's Board for Military Advisor Council. Her education credentials include a Doctorate in Higher Education Leadership awarded by the Virginia Commonwealth University, a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from Webster University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from San Diego State University.

**Deanna Parker, Analyst & Marine Corps COOL Lead, SOLID, LLC.**

Parker serves as an Occupational Analyst and Marine Corps COOL Lead for Solutions for Information Design, LLC (SOLID) where she focuses on research and analysis projects related to military and civilian occupations and credentialing. She also handles a myriad of tasks for the sustainment of the Marine Corps COOL program.



Prior to SOLID, Parker served as the Program Manager with the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) for nearly five years on the entrepreneurship team and oversaw all facets of numerous national programs that train veterans and military spouses in business ownership. Here Parker also developed the curriculum for IVMF's first virtual entrepreneurship training course.

Parker is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and served in various roles including legal chief and transportation dispatch chief before leaving the military as a sergeant. She received more than a dozen honors and was deployed to Afghanistan and North Africa.

Prior to her military service, Parker was a K-12 Health and Physical Education Teacher during the school year, and in the summers served as the Program Director for a youth camp where she planned and implemented all elements of the summer program for residential campers ages 8-18.

Parker holds a B.S. (dual degree) in health and physical education K-12 and biblical theology from Clarks Summit University, Pa., and an M.S. in criminal justice from Marywood University, Pa.

**Brian Miller, Executive Director of the Maryland Port Administration**

Miller was appointed Deputy Executive Director of Operations & Logistics for the Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) in December 2020. In this position, he oversees the MDOT MPA Operations, Security, Engineering, Information Technology and Risk Management/Safety Departments.





Prior to his current position, Miller served as Director of Operations for the Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) starting in December of 2016. In this position, Miller oversaw the daily operations of the Helen Delich Bentley Port of Baltimore's six public marine terminals. The operations division managed by Miller included terminal operations, facility maintenance, crane maintenance, cruise operations and the quality program.

Miller began his maritime career in 1989 with Port East Transfer/Hale Intermodal. In 1995 he joined the operations department of Lykes Bros. Steamship Corp., rising to Baltimore port manager for Lykes Lines LTD in 1999. In 2000, he accepted a position as operations manager for Maryland International Terminals and was promoted to manager in 2001. He held that position until 2006 when he was named General Manager of Operations for the MDOT MPA.

Miller also served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1987 through 1997. He achieved the rank of captain and was honorably discharged.

Miller received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1989 from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College) in Westminster, Md. He received a Master's in Transportation and Logistics Management from American Military University in West Virginia in 2008. He is married with two children and resides in Fallston, Md.

#### **Col. Keith A. Casey, United States Army (ret.), Director of Veteran Services, Concordia University Wisconsin**

Keith A. Casey enlisted in the U.S. Army on Jan. 2, 1985, as a 91F, Psychiatric Specialist and served at Fitzsimons Army Hospital, Aurora Colo. In August 1987, he entered the Green to Gold program and enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Casey was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Field Artillery in May 1989 and after the graduating the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course, was assigned to 4th Battalion, 11th Field Artillery at Fort Richardson, AK. After graduating the Field Artillery Officer Advanced Course in 1994, Casey was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery at Fort Hood, Texas. In July 1998, he was assigned to the Operations Group at Fort Irwin, Calif. In 2003, after graduating from the Commanding General and Staff College, he was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 33rd Field Artillery in Bamberg Germany. In 2005, he was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division, Division Artillery. In 2006, he was reassigned to the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters stationed at Fort Riley, Kan. In 2008, he was reassigned to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, at Fort Riley, Kan. In 2009, Casey assumed command of the 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Battalion at Fort Riley, Kan. After command, he was assigned as a Strategic Fellow to the United States Army War College working Middle East Policy and U.S. Army Leadership Doctrine. In August 2013, he was assigned to the Fires Center of Excellence at Fort Sill, Okla. Casey retired in September 2015 as a colonel. Prior to coming to Concordia University Wisconsin, he worked at Oshkosh Defense as a Program Quality Manager. he is married to the former Miss Sandra Simon and has two daughters, Ashlyn and Alyssa.

His military schooling includes the Field Artillery Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the U.S. Army Airborne School, the U.S. Army Air Assault School, the Commanding General and Staff College, and Strategic Fellow at the United States Army War College. His civilian education includes two Bachelor of Science degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and a Master of Arts from Webster University.

His military awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Accommodation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation, the Joint Meritorious Unit Citation, the Army Valorous Unit Citation, the Army Meritorious Unit Citation, the Army Superior Unit Award, the National Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Southwest Service Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, the Global War

on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Army Overseas Service Ribbon. Keith is awarded the Combat Action Badge, the Parachutist Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

### **Roy Swift, PhD, Executive Director, WorkCred**

Dr. Roy Swift is currently the executive director of Workcred, an affiliate of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Previously, he served as the chief workforce development officer at ANSI, and as ANSI's senior director of personnel credentialing accreditation programs. Prior to ANSI, he was a consultant to educational, certification, licensure, and health care organizations. Prior to ANSI, Dr. Swift was the executive director of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). This appointment followed a 28-year career in the U.S. Army Medical Department, where in his last position, he was chief of the Army Medical Specialist Corps in the U.S. Surgeon General's Office with policy responsibility for Army occupational therapists, physical therapists, dietitians, and physician assistants throughout the world.



He has served on many national committees, boards of directors, and advisory committees. He currently serves as a member of the UNESCO-IESALC 3rd World Higher Education Conference Policy Paper Advisory Committee; the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Education and Training's Direct Credit Assessment Task Force; the Higher Learning Commission's Stakeholder Roundtable; the UPCEA Council for Credential Innovation Leadership Committee; the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers' Defining Competencies Working Group; the University of Phoenix's College of Health Professions Advisory Board; the Society for Standards Professionals Board Certification Task Group's Competencies Sub-Task Group; SUNY Empire's Credential As You Go Advisory Board; Credential Engine's Certification and Licensure Advisory Group; the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Job Data Exchange Advisory Committee; and the School of Health Professions Board of Advocates at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

Previously, he served as advisor for the Stanford Graduate School of Education's Future of Work and Learning Working Group, and the George Washington Institute of Public Policy's Non-Degree Credentials Research Network Advisory Committee; chair of the Certification and Licensure Advisory Group at Credential Engine; was a member of the Apprenticeship Powered by Industry Leadership Committee hosted by Maher & Maher and the U.S. Department of Labor; member of the Interprofessional Healthcare Workforce Institute's Executive Advisory Council; chair of the Assembly of Review Committee Chairs of the former Council on Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Medical Association; chair of the American Occupational Therapy Association Accreditation Committee (Academic Accreditation); and on the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee for Certification. Swift also recently served on an Institute of Medicine of the National Academies Panel dealing with Provision of Mental Health Counseling Services under TRICARE, and a planning committee for the future of Allied Health Practice.

In addition, Dr. Swift served as chair of a working group within the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) to recognize personnel certifications among member countries through the development of multilateral recognition arrangements. He was also involved in working groups related to personnel credentialing with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in Geneva, Switzerland, and was a guest lecturer on credentialing at the University of Geneva.

Dr. Swift holds a B.S. in occupational therapy from the University of Kansas, an M.S. Ed. from the University of Southern California, and a Ph.D. in continuing and vocational education with an emphasis in continuing competency

in the professions from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has also successfully completed the University of Chicago's three-week management development course.

### **Jeremy Sadlier, Executive Director, American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration (ASHHRA)**

Jeremy Sadlier serves as a Senior Associate and the Executive Director of ASHHRA. Prior to taking on the role of Executive Director for ASHHRA, Jeremy provided Human Resource subject matter expertise to ASHHRA and the American Hospital Association. He is a seasoned health-care executive having spent much of his career with one of the Midwest's largest health care systems Advocate Aurora Health (AAH). With that expertise, Sadlier has been able to contribute content and expertise has been operationalized by health care systems and hospitals across the nation.



During his more than two decades with AAH he participated as a member of the Human Resources Team, Site and Market Executive Teams, and managed strategic and operational assignments. 12 of Jeremy's years with AAH were as part of the HR leadership team, filling the role of South Chicago Market-Human Resource Director with oversight for Advocate Christ Medical Center-a quaternary tertiary medical center, two community hospitals, Regional Laboratory Division (ACL), and the system's 14 pediatric hospital locations. His experience in both human resources and hospital operations were valued by the American Hospital Association (AHA) when they hired him in 2019 as the Director of HR initiatives.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Northern Illinois University and a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership-Nonprofit from Lewis University. He also holds a CHHR Certification in health care human resources. Since childhood, Sadlier has always been an avid cyclist and has taken mountain biking trips to Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Tennessee. Until COVID-19 forced him to re-evaluate his space, he had an entire room in his garage dedicated bicycles, protective gear, and tools.

### **Command Master Chief Edward Lewis, Force Readiness Command, USCG**

Master Chief Edward Lewis assumed duties as Command Master Chief for Force Readiness Command (FORCECOM) on June 18, 2021. His primary responsibility is to advise the Commander on issues and initiatives pertaining to all Coast Guard members and their families throughout the FORCECOM enterprise. Additionally, CMC Lewis assists with strategic initiatives that shape the training and readiness of the Coast Guard's workforce.



Master Chief Lewis's previous assignments include engineering and law enforcement duties at Station Destin, Fla., the USCGC MIDGETT, Seattle, USCGC POINT DORAN in Everett, Wash.; Engineer Petty Officer positions at Station Galveston Texas, USCGC POINT SPENCER and the USCGC MANOWAR; instructor at the Chief Petty Officer's Academy in New London, Conn.; the United States Coast Guard Academy as one of the first four Company Chiefs; Sector Guam in the Northern Mariana Islands as the Sector Command Master Chief; the School Chief of the Chief Petty Officer's Academy in Petaluma, Calif.; leading the Coast Guard's largest engineering rating as the Machinery Technician Rating Force Master Chief and as the Fourteenth District Command Master Chief, with an area extending from the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, American Samoa and activities in Saipan, Singapore, and Japan. Most recently, Master Chief Lewis served as the Command Master Chief of the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS). The 17,000-person DCMS enterprise delivers the systems and people in support of the U.S. Coast Guard's diverse mission sets through oversight of all human capital; lifecycle naval,

aeronautical, and civil engineering and logistics; acquisitions; information technology; and security.

In addition to being a graduate of the Chief Petty Officer's Academy Class 76, Master Chief Lewis graduated from the Command Master Chief course Class 2 and from the Army Sergeant's Major Academy, Class 57. He served on the Commandant's Leadership Advisory Council, as an analyst on the Outlook Vision Team (10-year Strategy), Royal Navy and US Coast Guard future technical support study, and the core team for the Evergreen Project (25-year Strategy). Master Chief Lewis holds a Master's in Human Service Counseling/Military Resilience with Distinction from Liberty University. Master Chief Lewis is a Permanent Cutterman with awards including four U.S. Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medals, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, U.S. Coast Guard Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, three Commandant Letters of Commendation, and the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

**Michael Bianchi, Senior Director, Education & Career Training, D'Aniello Institute for Veterans & Military Families (IVMF)**

Bianchi is the Senior Director, Education and Career Training, for the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF).

Bianchi served in the U.S. Army for 28 years, retiring in 2015. During his career, he made numerous worldwide deployments including assignments as Recruiting and Operations Officer and Professor of Military Science Army ROTC, at Syracuse University. He joined the IVMF team in 2015 as the National Program Director for the DoD Skillbridge Program, Onward to Opportunity. As O2O's senior team member, he oversees program delivery on 19 military installations and online training for distance learners. Onward to Opportunity trains over 10,000 participants yearly on technical and soft skills, serving as a gateway to employment in over 50 different in-demand career fields.



Bianchi is a 1994 graduate from Southern Illinois University and has a Master of Business Administration from Webster University.

**Erica McMannes, Chief People & Community Officer, Instant Teams & MSEP Employer Partner**

McMannes is a Founder and the Chief People & Community Officer of Instant Teams.

She has been front and center of the military community for more than two decades, leading community initiatives and advocating for innovation and progress in the military spouse space. She's held various Department of Defense leadership positions throughout Army MWR programming focused on Human Ecology and Community Dynamics. In 2012, she began consulting for veteran-owned startups in Silicon Valley specializing in application user acquisition, community growth and brand development. Her diverse experience led her to join forces with Liza Rodewald for the development and launch of Instant Teams in 2016, which was founded remotely, and she was instrumental in recently securing \$13 million in Series A funding from Tiger Global with more than 500 employees worldwide. Instant Teams received the Inc. 5000 Regional Mid-Atlantic recognition in 2022 and the company recently ranked #208 overall on the list and #13 in the HR industry.



McMannes is an alumna of the Patriot Boot Camp and V-WISE programs and is a two-time winner of grant-led startup pitch competitions. She is a prominent voice in conversations on military spouse employment and remote team leadership and culture. She's been highlighted at HubSpot's INBOUND Conference, Amazon's Women in Operations Leadership Summit, and is a two-time presenter at both the Military Influencer Conference and the Department of Defense's

Annual Military Spouse Employment Partnership Summit. Erica serves on the Board of Directors for both Hampton Roads Start Peninsula as well as the Greater Peninsula Impact100.

**Ian Davidson, Chief Growth Officer, SmartResume**

Davidson is the Chief Growth Officer of SmartResume, where he is responsible for partnerships, sales, marketing, and product strategy. He is passionate about how digital credential technology will transform the way job seekers understand their own capabilities, and how they will be discovered, recruited, and hired by employers. Prior to SmartResume, Davidson was the Vice President of Business Development for ZipRecruiter, where he led the company’s digital credential strategy. Prior to ZipRecruiter, he spent 13 years building advertising marketplaces. He is a graduate of the University of Southern California, and a proud son and grandson of Navy and Army veterans.



**Marcus Troutman, Director of Continuing Education, Olive-Harvey College**

**Col. Adam Rocke, Senior Director, Hiring Our Heroes Foundation**

**Jason Tyszko, Vice President, Center for Education & Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation**

**Scott Ferris, Director of Tech Ops Hiring Programs, United Airlines**

**Bettina Mrusek, Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Aeronautics, Embry Riddle**

**Joe Wescott II, Ed.D., Legislative Liaison, NC Dept of Military & Veterans Affairs**

**Judy Elias, Founder & President Heroes to Heroes**

**Gardner Carrick, Vice President, The Manufacturing Institute**

**Honorable Shawn Skelly, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, DoD**

**Cassie Byard, Executive Director of Task Force Movement**

**Daniel Kunze, TFM Senior Advisor Technology & Partnerships**

**Nick Geale, Vice President for Workforce & Labor, American Trucking Associations**

**Sam Whitehurst, Vice President, Dixon Center for Military & Veterans Services**

**James LaCoursiere Jr., Chairman, Veterans Employment & Education Commission, The American Legion**

**Jared Lyon, President & CEO, Student Veterans of America**

**Brandon McPherson, TFM Senior Advisor, Founder Service for Humanity, National Infrastructure Accelerator Alliance**

**Maj. Gen. Johnny Davis, Commanding General, US Army Cadet Command**

**Gary Schaub, Senior Advisor for Professional Military Education,  
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness**

**Jerry Elam, Program Manager, Military Partnerships, ABF**

**Mike Hazard, Training Specialist, Veterans in Piping,  
United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters**

**Kevin Duesterhaus, Illinois Secretary of State, Director of Driver Services**

**Jafi Roskey, Werner Senior Manager of Military Programs, Apprenticeship Program  
Manager, Driver Ambassador Manager, U.S. Air Force veteran**

**Thomas Serafin, Director of Safety, Training & Military Affairs,  
Florida Rock & Tank Lines, Inc.**

**Lindley Davis, Vice President, Human Resources, Jack Cooper, American Trucking  
Association**

**Gokhan Coskun, Executive Director of Yunus Emre Institute (Turkish Educational & Cultural  
Center Founder of INTED)**

**Desiree Butts, Executive Director, Strategic Partnerships, Military & VA Programs at  
National University**

**Steve Keck, Chief, Career Investment Division, U.S. Coast Guard**

**Katie Purswell, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Director, The American Legion**

**Julia Gusse, Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary for Benefits, U.S. Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

**Terrell Odom, Ed.D., MS-IDT, MBA, Director, Office for Military-Affiliated Communities,  
University of Chicago**

**Barry Shore, USA Care Living**

**Patricia Sandoval, Executive Vice President, Atlas Health Foundation**

**Esmeralda Silva, Vice President Student Affairs, Alliant University/President,  
Council of College & Military Educators (CCME)**

**DeAndre Jones, EdD, Acting Chief of Staff, Office of Career, Technical, & Adult Education,  
U.S. Department of Education**

**Sgt. 1st Class Olajide Gamu, U.S. Army, Deputy Director, Soldier For Life – Midwest Region**

**Garrett FitzGerald, CEO, CollegeRecon**

**Dan Wellman, Administrator, Illinois State Approving Agency**

**Schnell Carraway, Chief of Strategic Initiatives & Integration, Education Service, Veterans  
Benefit Administration**

**Eric Eversole, Vice President, U.S. Chamber of Commerce & President of Hiring Our Heroes**

**Lauren Augustine, Vice President of Government Affairs, Student Veterans of America**

**Josh Jones, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago**

**Colin Andersen, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago**

**Olivia Rodriguez, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago**

**Carly Fournier, Student Veteran, Loyola University Chicago**

**Alex Pirila, Chapter Advisor, Loyola University Chicago**

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