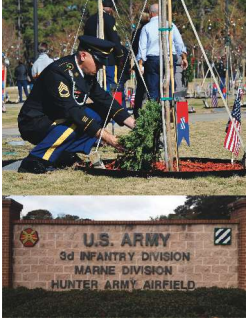




TALKING TAP

Fort Stewart's transition manager offers his best advice to you.



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Sergeant Major (E-9),
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FORT STEWART is the home of the 3rd Infantry Division, the storied "Marne Division" that first earned fame in World War I, has served in every conflict since, and deployed multiple times during the Global War on Terror. In the middle of the post, the Warriors Walk honors the 468 fallen members of the division who have made the ultimate sacrifice since Sept. 11. Not far away, the Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP) helps between 300 and 500 soldiers every month transition back to civilian life.

Patrick W. Bean Sr., a 26-year soldier who retired in 2013 and now serves as the transition services manager for both Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, leads the installation's efforts to ensure transitioning soldiers have the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to be competitive and successful in the global workforce.

We asked Bean how he and his staff are helping soldiers transition, and what advice he has for transitioning service members.



IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOUR TAP PROGRAM PROVIDES THAT MAY NOT BE OFFERED AT OTHER INSTALLATIONS?

We expanded our résumé development platform. At the conclusion of the employment workshops we offer soldiers the opportunity to continue résumé and interview development through our short online course, VET² 101, that teaches additional career soft skills, including résumé building and interview skills. The course is based on "Boots to Loafers, Finding Your True North" by retired Lt. Col. John W. Phillips. Phillips currently collaborates with the military program VET², offered through Georgia Tech Professional Education, and his book is required reading for

students enrolled, all at no cost to the soldier. The online VET² 101 course is a prerequisite to the traditional VET² program, which combines professional education with job experience by partnering active, transitioning and recently separated service members with an employer to receive classroom and online instruction.

HOW SOON SHOULD TRANSITIONING MEMBERS START THEIR JOB SEARCH?

I highly recommend 12 months prior to separation, regardless of your availability to work. It's important to put your résumé and transition plan to the test. Early feedback affords you time to adjust accordingly and auto-correct.

WHAT COMMON MISTAKES DO SERVICE MEMBERS MAKE THAT HURT THEIR CHANCES FOR MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT?

Many soldiers are not ready or are unable to translate their military experience to civilian workforce skills or are ill-prepared for the basics of a job search. Many times service members are unaware of resources, or do not effectively use the resources provided to them.

WHAT IS YOUR TOP RECOMMENDATION FOR TRANSITIONING MEMBERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE CIVILIAN SECTOR?

At every point in your career, leverage education and certification attainment to balance your experience. Experience + Education = Employment in fulfilling, stimulating and lucrative careers.