

MINORITIES &

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Fall 2019

Women's Role in the US Military

**Why leaving the Military is
Harder for Female Vets**

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4 Step Guide to Contracting Opportunities For the Disaster Relief and Reconstruction Process

By Gloria Berthold Larkin

The federal government anticipates spending over \$150 billion dollars for the Katrina and Rita hurricane disaster relief and reconstruction efforts. Contracting opportunities abound for businesses of all sizes and types and there is a great need for varied services and products. Businesses throughout the US can explore the contracting opportunities by following these four steps.

The disaster-related services and products needed in the Gulf states will cover every aspect of life,

business and government in the affected areas. Savvy companies are working to fill the needs now. However, this is a long-term, multi-layered process. While initial contracts have already been secured, there will be many more contracts worth billions of dollars to come over the next 6-12-18 months and longer. Those firms that employ both short-term and long-term strategies will be the most successful.

Step 1: Identify the Agencies with the Budgets to Buy What You Sell

This is one of the advantages in doing business with the federal government. Unlike the corporate environment, you can find out what agencies have budgets projected for your products and services and when they are planning to spend it.

The Department of Commerce Hurricane Contracting Information Center (HCIC) will help U.S. businesses, especially minority and small businesses, participate in the Gulf Coast rebuilding efforts. The HCIC allows companies to register

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with government agencies that are providing contracts to rebuild the Gulf Coast. The HCIC also provides basic information on doing business with the government, e-mail alerts regarding specific contracting opportunities, links to other government and local agencies, and information about minority business services.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is constantly changing to best serve the nation's requirements. The 22 agencies that initially made up the DHS originally maintained independent purchasing power. Now, the eight offices listed here are responsible for all procurement functions of the DHS.

DHS Acquisition Offices:

DHS Headquarters

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Note: FEMA is the key agency responsible for the majority of disaster-related budgets

Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

U.S. Secret Service (USSS)

U.S. Coast Guard Office of Procurement Management (USCG)

FedBizOpps is a federal government website that provides a central listing of most current federal contracts. Register at their website to receive the notices of bids and contracts that go

through the normal contract advertising process. However, it has been noted on the FedBizOpps web site that many emergency contracts may not make it to this public forum. You may need to contact each agency to determine the specific opportunities available.

For past expenditures, check with the Federal Procurement Data Center (FPDC), part of the U.S. General Services Administration. The FPDC manages the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), which is the current central repository of historical information on Federal contracting. The system contains detailed information on contract actions over \$2,500. The Executive departments and agencies award over \$200 billion annually for goods and services. The system can identify who bought what, from whom, for how much, when and where.

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Prime or General Contractors (GC) will be a source of sub-contracts for companies of all sizes. This disaster is of a magnitude that the US has never seen before and many contracting operations will be handled directly by Primes or GCs.

Action Items:

A. Check the agencies that have a history of purchasing your products and services.

B. Use some sort of contact manager software like ACT! or Goldmine to build your own government procurement database and schedule regular follow-up.

C. New vendors: Get registered in the Central Contractor Registry: <http://www.ccr.gov>

Step 2: Find the Specific Offices in Your Targeted Agencies That are Most Likely to Purchase Your Products and Services

The DHS and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have nationwide agencies and offices, as do Primes and GCs. Do you want to target areas that are geographically convenient to you? Do you have service, shipping or delivery issues that demand a local presence to your customers? How will this affect your bottom line? Can you effectively offer regional, national or international support? You will be most effective if you geographically prioritize the specific agencies, primes, GCs and offices to target.

Action Items:

A. Contact the agencies to participate in their Vendor Outreach and one-on-one sessions.

B. Review the DHS Prime Contractors list on the DHS website for the top five that are your best matches. Contact the small business liaisons to schedule capabilities briefings.

C. Visit the USACE website: <http://www.usace.army.mil/> and identify the General Contractors (GCs) that are your best matches.

Step 3: Identify the Specific PEOPLE in Your Targeted Offices

You want to find the specific decision-makers because they are your best connections to getting the business you want. They are THE KEY to your success. Finding the right people and taking the time and effort to building solid relationships will guarantee your long-term success.

Finding the agencies and end-users who buy what you sell is one of the most difficult aspects of government sales. And yet it is one of the most

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important because finding the people who buy your product or service is the most critical step in a successful targeted marketing and sales program.

Within the agency, thousands of program managers, program professionals, operating supervisors, engineers, and scientists participate in deciding what to purchase and from whom. These are the people you want to take the time find and to whom you want to introduce yourself.

The strategy is to identify both the end-users and the people involved in the actual procurement process. Market your abilities, solutions and products to the end-users so that they recommend your products and service specifications to the procurement personnel, so that

yours is the company the bid “was written for.”

Action Items:

A. Use the DHS and USACE websites to identify the following people who are keys to your success and put them in your contact manager software:

—The Points of Contact (POC) for the US Army Corps of Engineers, DHS agencies, State agencies, Red Cross, etc.

—The Small Business Specialists

—Prime Contractor Small Business Liaisons

B. Use the information you have researched from the FPDC web site to detail the specific people who have purchased your products or services

in the past. Add them to your contact manager.

C. Set up a schedule of contacts with these people. The contacts should include personal phone calls, emails, direct mail, visits during procurement conferences and all out-reach sessions. Try for at least 12 to 18 touches per year. Since active procurement projects are progress, step this up to every few weeks.

D. Long Term Action Item: As you build relationships with the Contracting Officers and Specialists, ask them for the names of the end users who are involved in the projects related to your products and services. Ideally, as you work with them you can begin to really understand the problems they experience and educate them how you can solve those problems. And perhaps become a preferred vendor.

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E. Join the International Association of Emergency Managers

Step 4: Identify Business Development Processes Appropriate for Your Services and Products

If you want to develop both short and long term business opportunities involved in the disaster reconstruction process you must develop a strategy that utilizes a variety of tactics. These are the most effective:

Web site: Make sure it is specifically addresses the government's purchasing best practices on your home page. Does your home page also note your GSA schedule and certifications?

Email: Is it professional? Do you use your business domain name? Or are you still using yahoo, hotmail or some non-business related address? It is very important to appear as professional as possible. Your business should be stable, reliable, established. Free or personal email accounts make you appear fly-by-night or non-professional.

Do you accept government purchase cards? This is mandatory in the government contracting environment. And it also works to your advantage by speeding up payments.

Action Items:

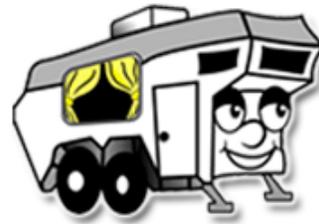
A. Take a critical look at your business development tools to determine if they meet the specific needs of your government prospects and clients. Give your website TOP PRIORITY.

B. Identify the companies that could be good teaming partners. Add them to your contact manager and start the relationship building process.

C. Schedule a pro-active contact process with all targeted contacts and assign specific tasks to specific people in your firm.

If you use these specific tactics and strategies you will find that you will have better opportunities for government contracts in both the short and long term.

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Expand Your Business With A Quality Team

By Margie Beiswanger

It can take a while to reach the point where your business is booming and you've got oodles and oodles of work to be distributed.

But once you reach that point, you'll want to be ready to hire quality team members who are as passionate about your business as you are and whose knowledge can help take your business to the next level.

So it's never too early to begin thinking about the steps involved in expanding your business beyond "solopreneur" status. The earlier

you begin contemplating this process, the more successful you'll be in hiring a quality team that you'll be happy with.

Take it Slow

Here's my first tip: Proceed with caution!

It can be costly to leap before you've done your research.

And, yes, it can be overwhelming to get started. You'll likely be

contemplating such questions as -
What type of help should I hire first?
What type of person should I look for? Where do I find qualified candidates?

The Basics

Here are a few essentials to start with. Keep these front and center as you take action to hire a quality team.

Identify what types of tasks you want to delegate and which tasks you

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would like to keep under your personal control. This can help you determine whether you need someone who is good with numbers, someone who is creative at determining ways to get your business into the news, someone who can provide outstanding client service... or all of the above and more!

Look for someone who has the ability to add to your business, not just keep it running at its current pace. There are many skilled individuals out there who can complement or supplement your expertise. Look to add team members who can have strengths that your business will benefit from.

Be realistic! You won't be able to pay someone a CEO's salary, so you can't expect to find someone with CEO experience who is willing to work for a clerical wage. You aren't

likely to find someone who will commit nearly the hours per week to your business that you do. Don't set yourself up for disappointment and disillusionment. Be realistic about your expectations for team members.

Initiative is priceless. The last thing you need is the added stress of having to hold someone's hand throughout everyday simple tasks. Make sure you are selecting team members who can function independently from you and who understand your needs, your style, and your goals.

Interpersonal skills are not optional. To develop the highest quality team for your business you need to be able to communicate easily with one another. There is nothing worse than feeling like you should have just done a task yourself. That defeats the purpose of delegating. So be sure that your team members have excellent interpersonal skills and that your

communication styles mesh with one another. Communication is key to building a team that will support you and your business well into the future.

Where to Start

Get out there and talk to others you know who have hired help with running their business. Ask your peers as well as other professional colleagues, such as your accountant, attorney, board members and members of organizations you belong to. They can often provide referrals for good support personnel. By tapping into trusted resources, you'll learn about options you might not have otherwise know about and you'll likely shorten your screening process.

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Check out popular blogs and websites with an eye for recommendations.

Set up some complimentary consultations with potential support staff. Get to know the people you're considering hiring. What are their strengths? What is their turnaround time on tasks? How do they like to communicate and how often? What's their current client load? Etc.

Last but not least, you might explore using an employment agency. A recruiter (for a fee) can eliminate the headache of searching for and selecting candidates to hire.

Explore Your Options

You'll find that most tasks you need help with can be outsourced or done by free-lance contractors. Tasks such as accounting, website design, marketing and public relations or even customer service and administrative duties can be handled on a "virtual" basis online via a virtual assistant (VA). VAs are either paid by the hour or the project.

You could very well end up hiring more than one person. There are VAs specializing in different types of projects - and you might eventually need the services of several of them. Or you might prefer to hire one assistant (as a manager) to work directly your other contractors and then let that person delegate your tasks and projects.

There are many different options. Be sure to explore them - sooner rather than later - before you're ready to hire.

Business Growth Requires Support

Hiring a quality team is a 'must' if you want to grow your business.

It's well worth the effort to get it right. And the sooner you begin exploring your options, the happier you'll be when it comes time to hire.

I am passionate about showing you how your brilliance can shine even brighter!

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Disparities

Although the term *disparities* is often interpreted to mean racial or ethnic disparities, many dimensions of disparity exist in the United States, particularly in health. If a health outcome is seen to a greater or lesser extent between populations, there is disparity. Race or ethnicity, sex, sexual identity, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and geographic location all contribute to an individual's ability to achieve good health. It is important to recognize the impact that social determinants have on health outcomes of specific populations. Healthy People strives to improve the health of all groups.

To better understand the context of

disparities, it is important to understand more about the U.S. population. In 2008, the U.S. population was estimated at 304 million people.¹

- In 2008, approximately 33%, or more than 100 million people, identified themselves as belonging to a racial or ethnic minority population.¹

- In 2008, 51%, or 154 million people, were women.¹

- In 2008, approximately 12%, or 36 million people not living in nursing homes or other residential care facilities, had a disability.²

- In 2008, an estimated 70.5 million people lived in rural areas (23% of the

population), while roughly 233.5 million people lived in urban areas (77%).³

- In 2002, an estimated 4% of the U.S. population ages 18 to 44 identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.⁴

During the past 2 decades, one of Healthy People's overarching goals has focused on disparities. In Healthy People 2000, it was to reduce health disparities among Americans. In Healthy People 2010, it was to eliminate, not just reduce, health disparities. In Healthy People 2020, that goal was expanded even further: to achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups.

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Healthy People 2020 defines *health equity* as the “attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.”⁵

Healthy People 2020 defines a *health disparity* as “a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage. Health disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles to health based on their racial or ethnic group; religion; socioeconomic status; gender; age; mental health; cognitive, sensory, or physical disability; sexual orientation or gender identity; geographic location; or other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion.”⁶

Over the years, efforts to eliminate disparities and achieve health equity have focused primarily on diseases or illnesses and on health care services. However, the absence of disease does not automatically equate to good health.

Powerful, complex relationships exist between health and biology, genetics, and individual behavior, and between health and health services, socioeconomic status, the physical environment, discrimination, racism, literacy levels, and legislative policies. These factors, which influence an individual’s or population’s health, are known as *determinants of health*.

For all Americans, other influences on health include the availability of and access to:

- High-quality education
- Nutritious food
- Decent and safe housing
- Affordable, reliable public transportation
- Culturally sensitive health care providers
- Health insurance
- Clean water and non-polluted air

Throughout the next decade, Healthy People 2020 will assess health disparities in the U.S. population by tracking rates of illness, death, chronic conditions, behaviors, and other types of outcomes in relation to demographic factors including:

- Race and ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual identity and orientation
- Disability status or special health care needs
- Geographic location (rural and urban)

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THEN AND NOW: How women's roles have changed in the US military

By Talia Lakritz

- *Women were confined to working as cooks, seamstresses, and nurses in the **US military** during the 18th and 19th centuries.*
- *Their roles expanded with the formation of the **Women's Army Corps** in 1941.*
- *Women became integrated into the **US military** in 1978, except they weren't allowed to serve in combat.*
- *As of 2015, there are no more restrictions about what positions women can or cannot hold in the army.*

During the Revolutionary War, women helped the war effort as cooks and nurses. Some women even disguised themselves as men in order to fight on the front lines, hundreds

doing the same during the American Civil War.

Today, 16.9% of the army is female and women continue to climb the ranks and

reach historic levels of command (and they're probably not disguised when they do it ...).

Here's how women's roles have

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changed in the US military over the years.

Women were confined to working as cooks, seamstresses, and nurses in the 18th and 19th centuries — but some women distinguished themselves as heroes off the battlefield.

Women weren't allowed to serve in the armed forces on the battlefield, but they aided the war effort in clerical roles or as cooks, seamstresses, laundresses, or nurses during the Revolutionary War.

There were also heroic women who distinguished themselves during the war such as Nancy Hart, who worked as a spy and is most famous for holding British soldiers at gunpoint in her home after they killed her last turkey.

Some women took drastic measures to join the front lines.

During the Civil War, over 400 women secretly enlisted in the military disguised as men, according to the US Army's official website. Women also worked as spies, sneaking information past unsuspecting British troops.

During World War I, 35,000 women served in the army.

Most of the women worked as nurses or in food preparation, but they also filled roles of telephone operators and architects in addition to secretarial and administrative work.

A much wider array of positions became available to women with the establishment of the

Women's Army Corps during World War II.

The Women's Army Corps (WAC) was formed in 1941, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt officially made it part of the US Army two years later. Women worked as part of Air, Ground, and Service forces, doing everything from repairing radio equipment to cryptography. Instead of nurses, they became medical and surgical technicians.

WAC was disestablished when male and female forces were integrated in 1978.

Slowly, the doors began opening for women seeking a career in military service. Beginning in 1976, women were admitted to all service academies. Basic training became

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integrated in 1977. A separate branch for women was no longer necessary, so Congress disbanded the Women's Army Corps in 1978.

Of the 119 women who joined the first group of female cadets at West Point, 62 women graduated as second lieutenants in 1980.

With equal access to a military education, women began rising through the ranks.

Kristin Baker became the first woman to be chosen first captain of the Corps of Cadets at West Point in 1989. General Ann Dunwoody was the first woman to achieve the rank of four-star general in 2008. Lieutenant General (Retired) Patricia Horoho became the first female Surgeon General of the US Army in 2011.

The Department of Defense opened all combat jobs to women in 2015.

The 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and

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Assignment Rule stated that, “Service members are eligible to be assigned to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from assignment to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground.” Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta rescinded this rule in 2015.

According to the Military Times, the policy change opened 220,000 new jobs to women in the armed forces: Army Rangers, Navy SEALs, Air Force parajumpers, tank drivers, and more.

In 2018, then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said that “the jury is still out” on whether or not integrating women into the infantry has been a success because there are too few women to obtain comprehensive data.

The Military Times reported that nearly 800 women were serving in infantry, cavalry and fire support in five divisions.

Women have gone on to become leaders in combat.

In 2018, First Lieutenant Marina A. Hierl became the first woman to lead an infantry platoon, according to The New York Times. Out of 37 women who have attended the Marines Corps’ Infantry Officer Course, she is one of only two women who have passed and the only one currently leading a platoon.

More women are serving in the military than ever before.

In 1973, there were 42,278 active-duty enlisted women in the military. In 2010, that number jumped to 167,729.

In 2017, a historic high of 301 women were admitted to West Point.

Pew Research reports that there are more women in the active-duty military now than there have ever been before.

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Why leaving the military is harder for female vets

By: Apoorva Mittal

When she left the military in 2005, Jodie M. Grenier went from being on a team of intelligence analysts reporting to then-Marine Corps Gen. Jim Mattis, with a top security clearance, to waiting tables.

“It was frustrating. I had a very purpose-driven job, and when I got out, I went to a community college and waited tables,” Grenier said.

Grenier participated in the transition classes offered by the military, but to her, they were ineffective and

unhelpful. She searched job portals and worked as a bartender to support her education. Not having children

While some of these challenges affect all veterans, the issues are compounded for women because of cultural stereotypes and the gender pay gap.

afforded her flexibility that other women veterans might not have, she said.

Grenier is not alone. More than 30,000 women leave the military every year. There are 2 million women veterans in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, according to data from the Department of Veterans Affairs. By 2040, the VA expects women to make up 18 percent of the veteran population.

As more female troops transition from active duty to civilian life, they face unique challenges. Lack of a community of fellow female vets, lack of child care assistance for single

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mothers and financial instability due to lack of financial literacy are all issues women veterans face, experts say. While some of these challenges affect all veterans, the issues are compounded for women because of cultural stereotypes and the gender pay gap.

“Civilians often fail to recognize women as veterans, leading to mistrust between women veterans and their counterparts,” said Grenier, CEO of Foundation for Women Warriors, an organization that assists women veterans and their children.

About 67 percent of women veterans find their financial transition from the military difficult, compared to 47 percent of men; and more women vets experience “loss of income” as a key transition challenge compared to male vets, according to Maureen

Casey, CEO of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University.

Women veterans also have different social and psychological experiences than women who are private citizens.

“Civilians often fail to recognize women as veterans, leading to mistrust between women veterans and their counterparts,”

When transitioning into society, these differences can upend the expectations people normally have about women.

Dawn Fitzgerald started serving in the Navy right after high school. She transitioned out of active duty in 1998, and worked her way up from a janitor at Merck to a senior specialist in that

company’s supply chain division in West Point, Pennsylvania.

“When you have strong leadership skills, sometimes, people don’t like that,” Fitzgerald, 44, said. “I have been told many times that I am intimidating.”

The military encourages a direct communication style that many civilian workplaces might not understand, according to Kayla Williams, senior director at the Center for a New American Security. Many veterans talk about the need to change their communication style when they become civilians; the societal penalty for directness is higher for women than men, experts say.

“Women can pay a higher penalty for not conforming to some of those expectations,” Williams said. “It is a jarring transition and can take some real recalibration of your

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presentation style if you are coming into a significantly different work environment.”

Fitzgerald, on the other hand, uses her “strong leadership” style to mentor younger women starting out by telling them it’s okay to be called “strong” and “assertive.”

“Women get called bitches when they are assertive and strong, but men are called leaders,” she says. “It’s hard.”

Less transition support

The Center for Women Veterans started offering exit seminars for women, but its main focus was making women veterans aware of health care resources. However, experts say that women veterans also need training on social and psychological skills to cope with the transitions. “It took the Army 17

years to get me to the rank of major, so there is no program that is going to be three to six months that is going to prepare me for civilian life,” Jas Boothe, who founded Final Salute Inc, said. “America needs to carry the torch, and go beyond the handshake and ‘thank you for your service.’ We need a boot camp that is longer and effective.”

Child assistance

More women vets are likely to be single parents than male veterans, experts say. In such a situation, planning for financial stability and housing becomes imperative.

Further, finding affordable child care while pursuing education becomes a major obstacle. “There are subsidized programs, but when you are working and in school, your income is just over the threshold, and it becomes an

issue to get subsidized child care,” Grenier said. In California, the average weekly **cost** of care for an infant child is \$211, compared to the subsidized rate of \$60 a week for a single active duty E-4 at a Child Development Center on a base, according to Grenier .

Financial instability

Financial instability can be a major challenge post-service, Casey said. There is a lack of awareness in the women veteran community, and making them informed is also a challenge, she said. “The instructors in transition assistance don’t necessarily know all the services themselves,” Casey said. “The real opportunity is how do we create public-private partnerships, where agencies can come together to provide a complete picture of the opportunities available.”

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Lack of peer networks

A lack of a natural peer network where women can freely share their experiences leads to isolation during the transition. “Though the number of women veterans is increasing, there are still so few that they lack a natural peer support network, which can be an emotional challenge,” Grenier said. Grenier’s organization holds workshops to connect veterans with the community.

Here are a few of the organizations that help with the challenges mentioned above.

Foundation for Women Warriors

Connect with the community: The foundation provides one-day, professional development workshops

that bring women veterans together with leaders in business and academia to teach about negotiating salary, self-branding, and creating a sense of community.

Child care assistance: They provide childcare stipends for daycare (children ages 0-5) and spring, summer and winter camp assistance for working or student veteran mothers.

Final Salute Inc.

The programs have assisted women veterans and children in over 30 states and territories.

One program, called H.O.M.E., provides a full range of transition services like housing, food, clothing, child care assistance. Their other program, S.A.F.E., offers financial education to help with financial planning.

Institute for Veterans and Military Families

At Syracuse University, [the](#) IVMF works with communities and non-profits across the nation and has a variety of veteran programs.

Onward to Opportunity

This program run by Syracuse’s Institute for Veterans and Military Families that provides certification, professional mentorship and connection to a vast network of over employers for placement service.

America Serves

A coordinated network of organizations dedicated to serving the military community by connecting them to resources for their specific needs.

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