



# Models of Success

Spectrum's Veteran Hiring Strategy



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In 2015, I was fortunate to be part of a group of industry leaders who had a desire to develop a collaborative effort to hire and retain military veterans. That group came to be known as the Veterans Advisory Council. Through its insight and vision, Mission Media was launched in September 2015. Since that time, Mission Media has held a Hiring Our Heroes job fair, launched an online HR portal of resources, hosted learning opportunities, spearheaded an industry jobs

exhibit at the Student Veterans of America national conference and more. This publication is the latest Mission Media initiative.

Models of Success is a collection of case studies focused on employers' best practices for recruiting, onboarding and retaining veterans and insight from veterans who have successfully transitioned into careers within the cable and media entertainment industry.

This first issue of Models of Success is focused on Spectrum's veterans hiring program. After learning about Spectrum's success strategies, please pass this document along to others throughout the industry. Together, we can strengthen our industry's veterans employment efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris".

Christopher Powell  
Founding Member, Mission Media Veterans Advisory Council  
CEO, Talmatrix

**L**eadership, teamwork, mission focus and attention to detail. What company wouldn't want an employee with these characteristics? The country's veterans possess these traits and more, yet unemployment rates among post-9/11 veterans exceed those of the general population. To address this problem and tap this rich talent pool, the cable industry launched its Mission Media initiative in 2015. In the stories that follow, we explore company initiatives and veteran insights. See something you think might work at your company? Try it. Reach out for more details. By learning from one another, our industry benefits and our well-deserving veterans gain the jobs they need.

Attracting and retaining vets can be challenging. "Focus on the action component you can offer veteran employees," stressed John Hendrickson, Vice President of Core Operations for Spectrum, and a former U.S. Army Specialist. "They love missions and understanding their contribution."

Technology and its ever-changing nature may also draw veterans. "You are always on your toes because the technology is constantly evolving," said William Burton, Maintenance Technician with Spectrum and former Specialist with the U.S. Army Reserves. "There's never the same day twice, which helps keep work interesting and engaging."

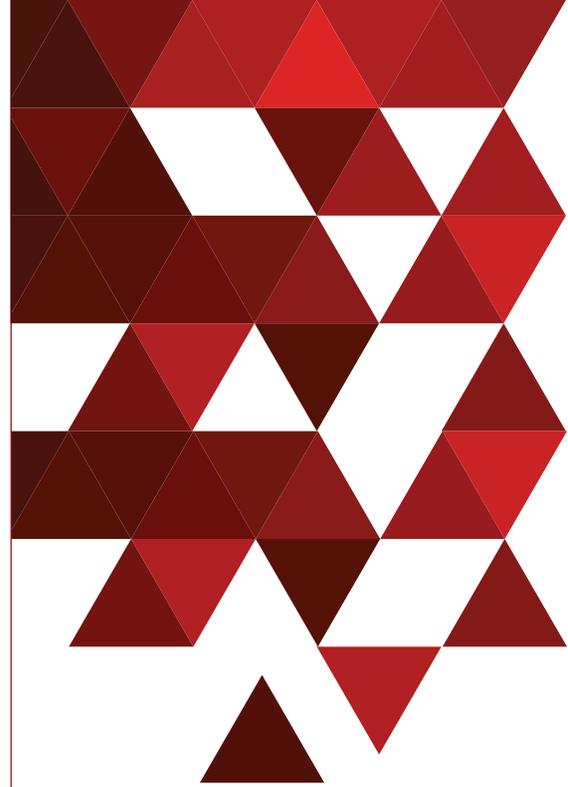
"I knew I wanted to work in the cable industry when I was transitioning, and Spectrum was the first company to hire. I've had four promotions in three years to my current role as a supervisor. I'm glad that I get to represent women who also have translatable skills," said Jalisa Abney, Field Operations Supervisor and a former U.S. Army Radio and Information Security Repair Specialist.

Matching the veteran with the right job also presents challenges. "Most Fortune 500 companies convert less than 1% of the people who apply for jobs. That's a huge opportunity" said Jennifer Tracy, Senior Director of Recruiting Solutions at Spectrum. "Someone coming from the military may not know where to start their job search."

To help veteran applicants, Spectrum recently added an "Introduce Yourself" video feature to its military recruiting page. Candidates transitioning from the military can upload a personal video describing their interests, experience and what they are passionate about. The video enables candidates to show their personality in a way that isn't reflected in a resume. A Spectrum military HR sourcer reviews the videos and directs the candidate to the right position. The company has already hired one veteran who used the Introduce Yourself video, which began in late 2017.

Often a veteran's military occupational specialty won't translate directly to a position. "Don't discard any resume submitted by a veteran. Pick up the phone to learn more about their background," advised Jay Jallette, Military Sourcing Program Manager for Spectrum and former Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy. "Sometimes veterans don't feel like the work they did was significant. Often, veterans don't know how to translate their experiences into a corporate resume," he added.

Some military positions translate naturally. For example, a computer detection system repairer might be a match for an IT position or a multichannel transmission system operator maintainer a match for a headend technician job. But also think outside the box. "Someone who is a military recruiter could be good working independently and selling services," explained Tracy. "He or she has faced challenging environments in the military and, therefore, may be more comfortable selling door to door."



"This is a great industry if you want to be on the bleeding edge of technology."



**John Hendrickson**  
Spectrum V.P. Core Operations  
U.S. Army Specialist (8 years)



“They say that you won’t find camaraderie in the civilian work environment like you have in the military, but I think that we have it at Spectrum.”



**Jay Jallette**

Spectrum Military Sourcing  
Program Manager

U.S. Navy Lieutenant  
Commander (20 Years)

Don’t overlook retention. “When veterans come to work for a company, it could be the first time in their career where they can leave if it’s not a good fit,” explained Tracy. Veteran-centric employee resource groups and mentors are very useful in easing the transition to a civilian workforce. “It’s a different world from being told what to do every day and suddenly having options. Being able to help the person make that transition is important,” Tracy added.

Maintenance Technician Burton concurred that support is essential. “Veterans can come across as intense, but please don’t mistake that for something other than the general drive and motivation that has been instilled in us during our service. We also are humble and don’t want a ton of public accolades and may need support communicating in different settings.”

## **SPECTRUM TO INCREASE VETERAN HIRING BY 5% BY 2020**

Spectrum is committed to growing and investing in an insourced, highly skilled diverse workforce, and it has identified military veterans as a targeted source for new hires. Currently, Spectrum employs nearly 12,000 veterans, which represents almost 12% of its total workforce. The MSO has committed to increasing overall veteran hiring by 5% by 2020.

Why target vets as potential employees? “Veterans are trained with a mission focus,” said Tracy. Whether a field technician troubleshooting a problem for a customer or an IT technician assessing a network outage, they have to discover what happened, why, and then fix it — just as they would on a mission. “Those are crucial skills for us to take advantage of and leverage in our organization,” Tracy explained.

“The military also teaches you attention to detail and organizational skills,” explained Burton, “The smallest thing you miss can cause an error for the customer.”

The ability to support employees and customers is another benefit of military training. “Taking care of people was as important in the field as it is in corporate America,” Hendrickson added. “As a squad leader, I even had to care about my soldier’s feet to ensure that they could make the next climb or march.”

How will Spectrum meet its ambitious 5% hiring goal? In January 2017, the MSO created a two-person team to support military sourcing. The team is linked to the Spectrum Diversity & Inclusion Team on targeted outreach efforts and leverages both direct and in-direct initiatives and partnerships at the corporate and local levels to support military recruiting. The initiative yielded an impressive 4,127 veteran hires in a 12-month period. Where did Spectrum find these capable vets? The MSO has several current and ongoing initiatives at work.

## **BROADBAND TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP**

One of the cornerstones of its military recruiting is the 6,000-hour Broadband Technician Apprenticeship founded in 2007 as a legacy Time Warner Cable Company program. Spectrum has adapted and expanded the program as part of its overall strategy to increase the number of veterans in its workforce. The program allows Spectrum to build a pipeline of highly skilled, mission-oriented technicians while helping veterans work through their transition by providing a career path that will allow them to buy a home and continue to advance professionally. Spectrum currently offers its apprenticeship program in five states: Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas.

Participants in the program who are also eligible for the GI bill can earn a Spectrum salary in addition to their GI bill payments. “To leave the military and go back to a starting wage can be frustrating for vets,” Tracy noted. The Broadband Technician Apprenticeship program allows veterans to earn two sources of compensation while they undergo training. Upon completion, they are eligible for a higher wage.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) certifies the program, and it dovetails into the Broadband Technician Career Path Plan. Participants become certified by the DOL upon successful completion of new hire training and ongoing training. Participants can remain in the program for up to three years depending on length of the defined career path. Spectrum recently received approval from the DOL to move forward with a National Registered Apprentice Program. Approval will provide field technicians with access to the Registered Apprentice Program in the additional states within Spectrum’s 41-state footprint.

Spectrum’s Apprenticeship Program has received numerous citations, including the North Carolina Governor’s Award for Excellence in Workforce Development 2013, and recognition from the North Carolina Department of Commerce (NC-DOC) Secretary of Commerce and the White House Summit on Apprenticeship. In addition, the program was nominated for CTHRA’s Excellence in HR award.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

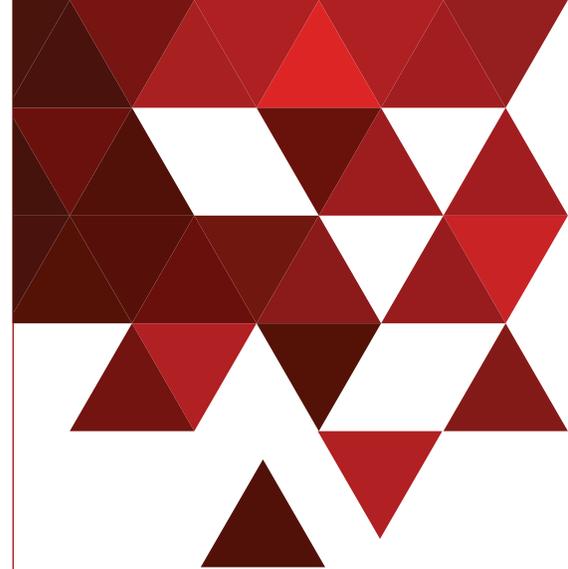
- Veterans discharged less than 10 years can collect as much as \$15,450 per year in GI Bill benefits for up to three years, based on their individual eligibility, in addition to the technician’s salary.
- Participants gain access to the technician career progression (eligibility and requirements).
- Participants earn DOL Broadband Apprenticeship Training National Certification upon completion of program and potentially dual accreditation through post-secondary institutions when available and college credits towards an Associate’s degree.

## SPECTRUM BENEFITS

- Improves retention by 5% among participants vs. technicians overall
- Enriches relationship with local military installations
- Helps recruit veterans and builds a diverse workforce
- Provides possible funding to off-set cost of training apprentices
- Delivers assorted tax benefits available per state
- Offers the potential for federal tax benefits (proposed legislation being discussed)

## MILITARY SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP

The military spouse is critical to the veteran’s successful transition to civilian life. To support the often-overlooked wives and husbands of its military recruits, Spectrum also participates in the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP), which is part of the Department of Defense Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program. MSEP is a solution to help military spouses find and maintain employment to achieve their career goals, despite the challenges of frequent relocation. Spectrum was inducted into the program on October 2, 2017, at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Building Hall of Flags. On behalf of Spectrum, Howie Hodge, Vice President of External Affairs, signed a statement of support at the ceremony.



“Spectrum recognizes hard work. If you take the initiative to learn, it is rewarded. I’m a living testament.”



**Jalisa Abney**  
Spectrum Field Operations Supervisor  
U.S. Army Radio and  
Information Security Repair Specialist  
(4 years)



“In a lot of ways a civilian job is just like the military — you grow at the rate that you are motivated to grow, but there is always a helping hand.”



**William Burton**  
Spectrum Maintenance Technician  
U.S. Army Reserves Specialist (11 years)

## FORT BRAGG CAREER RESOURCE CENTER

In 2017, Spectrum launched a training facility within the Career Resource Center at Fort Bragg to help the employer further accelerate its veteran hiring. Spectrum uses the center to screen, interview and train veterans prior to transitioning into civilian life. The inaugural class of up to eight recruits began a four-week training course on January 22, 2018. Candidates who complete the training, background investigation and drug screening can convert into a field operations role, if they are interested. With this program, veterans would experience no down time between their military service and civilian career. Spectrum is committed to creating technical training centers on additional military bases as opportunities become available.

## HIRING OUR HEROES (HOH) CORPORATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

In August 2017, Spectrum joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Hiring Our Heroes (HOH) Corporate Fellowship Program, and two Fellows are currently on-board at the organization’s Denver headquarters, one working in HR and one in IT.

The 12-week program trains transitioning service members and military spouses on skills needed to succeed in the civilian workforce through an educational program and on-the-job training opportunities. Held three times per year, each Fellows class hosts 15 to 30 active-duty service members or military spouses who gain experience working in the private sector with participating companies. Most of the participants are senior enlisted service members or junior officers, and 85% of the HOH Fellows have a bachelor’s degree. The military pays for the internship and certifications, at no cost to employers.

The program helps Spectrum identify potential candidates by geographic region. To move closer to its 5% veteran hiring target, and following on the heels of its successful HOH launch at corporate, the MSO is expanding its Corporate Fellowship Program in 2018 to 10 locations across its 41-state footprint (see table).

Spectrum Communications Locations	Supporting Base
Colorado Springs, CO	Fort Carson
San Diego, CA	Camp Pendleton
El Paso, TX	Fort Bliss
Killeen, TX	Fort Hood
San Antonio, TX	Joint Base San Antonio
Kansas City, KS	Fort Leavenworth/Fort Riley
Smyrna, GA	Greater Atlanta Area
Clarksville, TN	Fort Campbell
Palisades Park, NJ	Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst
Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia	National Capital Region

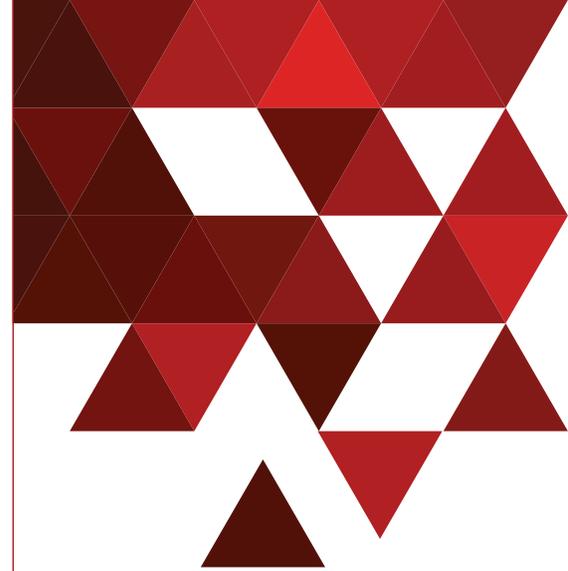
## VETERAN'S DAY ACTIVITIES 2017

It's not just headquarters reaching out to veterans. Hiring veterans has been a focal point of Spectrum's recruiting strategy for all of its business units. On and around Veteran's Day, departments across the company participate in events that highlight the MSO's partnerships with military organizations, programmers and local communities. It is targeting awareness opportunities, expanding its existing programs and supporting industry events to showcase Spectrum's commitment to the military. Below is a summary of events.

Initiative	Description
Future of Internet & Television Conference	Spectrum participated in this panel in Florida highlighting veteran hiring strategies.
Take a Vet to School Day	Spectrum and the History Channel invited local veterans, elected officials and veteran employees to visit 30 middle schools across Spectrum's footprint and engage with students.
Transitioning 21st Century Warriors Into 21st Century Workforce	Spectrum participated in an event in Washington, D.C., featuring Senator Blumenthal and two members of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, a representative from the Department of Labor and veteran organizations to further engage in a discussion about how the private sector, the legislative and executive branches of government and the non-profit world can come together to help smooth veterans' transition from military service to the private sector.
Spectrum Housing Assist	Spectrum and more than 75 employee volunteers repaired the homes of veterans in Louisiana and Florida. Spectrum invited elected officials to join the event.

## VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS

Spectrum sponsors the weeklong Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) National Convention, which attracts thousands of the nearly 1.7 million VFW and Auxiliary delegates. In addition, Spectrum participated in Mission Media's collaborative booth at the Student Veterans of America National Conference in early January 2017. The booth spotlighted careers within the cable and media entertainment industry.



“My role is to lead 1,300 talented people in our core services of home security, Internet, phone and video. I am privileged to lead and to have the opportunity to learn from the people around me.”



**Charlene Keys**

Spectrum,  
A.V.P. of Field Operations  
U.S. Air Force Captain (8 years)



## VETERAN HIRING RESOURCES

### ARMY PARTNERSHIP FOR YOUTH SUCCESS

Young men and women who enter the military straight from high school or college may need special help tailored to their inexperience at finding a job. Spectrum also participates in the Army Partnership for Youth Success. This program helps soldiers prepare for a career after the Army by connecting them with employers who understand the skill, discipline and work ethic that military service members bring to a business. The program is part of a long-term U.S. Army effort to help soldiers forge professional relationships with businesses and encourage business owners to look to the Army as a plentiful and reliable recruiting source.

Upon completion of their military service, soldiers participating in Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS) will be guaranteed a job interview at the PaYS partner company of their choice. This program does not guarantee employment, but it does help soldiers clear the often-daunting first hurdle to starting a career: getting a foot in the door.

Participation is available to active duty and Army Reserve enlisted soldiers along with Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets who accept an Army Reserve, National Guard or active duty commitment.

### HIREFURPOSE

Spectrum also leverages HirePurpose, an online resource, to access a community of active job seekers, including transitioning service members, veterans, student veterans, and military spouses. Transitioning veterans can apply for Spectrum jobs at [www.HirePurpose.com](http://www.HirePurpose.com).

HirePurpose has representation on more than 50 military bases. HirePurpose promotes Spectrum's jobs, provides education on bases and helps build Spectrum's long-term military outreach program. HirePurpose is also creating a Career Guide for Spectrum that will highlight the company's culture and career opportunities.

### RECRUITMILITARY

RecruitMilitary's goal is to engage transitioning and civilian-experienced military veteran men and women in the most meaningful way. Some will discover new possibilities in its magazine, others will target jobs through the website at [www.RecruitMilitary.com](http://www.RecruitMilitary.com) and still others will find success face-to-face with employers at job fairs. Spectrum participated in 32 RecruitMilitary career fairs held in the MSO's footprint in 2017.

#### HIREFURPOSE

**40,000**

monthly unique visitors

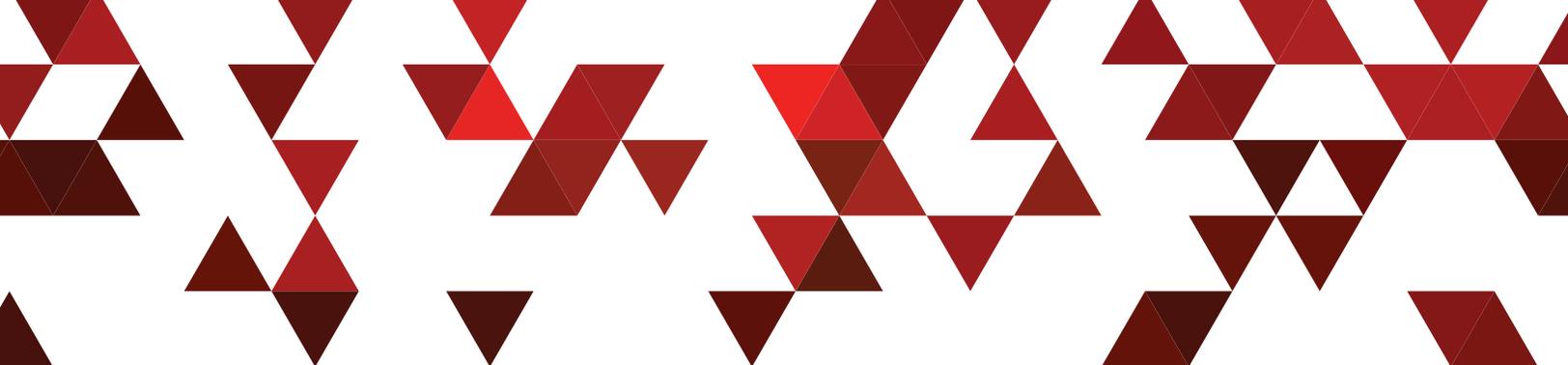
**135,000**

newsletter subscribers

#### RECRUITMILITARY

**1.3 MILLION**

job seeker accounts



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