



North Carolina National Guard Networks with Businesses

Story by Army Capt. Rick Scoggins, North Carolina National Guard Public Affairs, January 10, 2014

RALEIGH, N.C. – The mission of the North Carolina National Guard’s Education and Employment Center (NCNGEEC) is to assist our service members with finding viable employment opportunities.

So, it was only fitting that one of the N.C. Guard’s most senior leaders was selected to participate in a panel discussion attended by senior business leaders from the N.C. Bankers Association and the N.C. Chamber of Commerce during the opening session of the N.C. 12th Annual Economic Forecast Forum at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham, Jan. 6.

Brig. Gen. Kenneth Beard, Assistant Adjutant General of Sustainment for the N.C. National Guard, was asked to be a member of the panel whose focus was to discuss the economic importance of the military in general and Federal Government contract opportunities that may help to diversify private businesses’ revenue streams in N.C.



NCNG Brigadier General Kenneth Beard (left) and Scott Dorney

In addition to Beard, the panel was composed of former military officers: retired General Dan K. McNeill, current Chairman of the Board of Directors of the N.C. Military Foundation and former Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division and the XVIII Airborne Corp at Fort Bragg; retired Maj. Gen. Cornell A. Wilson, Jr., Military Advisor for Pat

McCrory, Governor of North Carolina and Mr. Scott Dorney, Executive Director of the N.C. Military Business Center.

Most importantly though, the request for Beard’s participation on the panel helped to further networking opportunities for the NCNGEEC and share with business leaders the benefits of hiring military members into the private sector.

Currently unemployment for N.C. National Guard members is a major issue, which is why the NCNGEEC was stood up in July 2013. The NCNGEEC is making positive strides too; since its inception, the center has found 217 jobs for NCNG members.

As more and more service members find out about the center, the NCNGEEC is making real headway. They have accepted nearly 500 clients since June and are currently working on placements for almost 400 of those already in their database.

“In addition to providing an overview of the value of the Guard to the N.C. economy, the intent was to educate attendees on the current employment initiatives of the NCNG through the Education and Employment Resource Center,” said Ms. Kelly Loring, a contractor who is the Education and Resource Center Outreach Program Coordinator for the NCNG. “We want to provide an awareness of the value to employers in hiring veterans and Guardsmen, explain the need for apprenticeships, funded training, and on the job training opportunities, to invite businesses to post their jobs on the **American Jobs for America’s Heroes** (AJAH) job board and invite employers to develop a relationship with the Employment Specialists of the EEC to more quickly fill open positions with qualified Guard members.”

AJAH is a national campaign to encourage companies to post jobs for unemployed Guard members through the National Guard Employment Network (NGEN) in which the NCNG is a participant. AJAH

facilitated the invite for Beard to not only to discuss the NCNGEEC but to also talk about the AJAH campaign and encourage N.C. employers to register and post jobs for the Guard, which would flow back to NCNG through NGEN.

Beard talked about how NCNG members live throughout all 100 counties of our state and how they bring their unique life and individual education experiences to their military jobs. Beard also explained how the NCNG members bring the positive values and traits attributed to all military members such as teamwork, initiative, self-sufficiency, punctuality and the ability to operate in dynamic environments.

Beard spoke one on one with members of the panel after the opening session in hopes of raising awareness for the NCNG's EEC as well so that the Guard can start networking with the higher income and higher technology companies in the state.



Panel Presentation at the 12 Annual Economic Forecast Forum in Durham, NC on January 6th

Photo: NC Chamber

Dorney was a huge advocate for asking private business to consider working with the Federal Government and the DoD in order to expand their market base.

“Selling to the military or Federal government expands those markets,” he said. “Whether it be exports, selling to the Federal government or other foreign militaries; looking for opportunities to expand your markets is critical.”

Ultimately, the NCNGEEC felt like the NCNG presence at the forum opening session was productive.

“One of the key outcomes of the event was the invitation to host a monthly collaboration meeting with a number of state agencies by the N.C. Department of Veterans Affairs,” said Loring. “The intent of these meetings will be interagency information sharing and synergistic planning to support the military community more effectively. Other outcomes will be seen in the months to come as businesses respond to the invitation to post their open positions on the **American Jobs for America's Heroes** job board.”

AJAH has 140 trade associations that regularly publish short articles about the campaign in their member newsletters and magazines representing about 750,000 employers nationally.

Among the states, N.C. has a lower rate of employers participating in the program compared with other states. Key supporters of the program whom are also members of the N.C. Chamber of Commerce hoped to raise awareness about the AJAH campaign during the forum as a way to increase employer participation in N.C.

The NCNGEEC currently has a partnership with the N.C. Community College system which they are using to develop education and certification programs that transform Military Occupational Specialties into civilian employment skills. This initiative would ultimately mean those NCNG members with jobs, such as medics or military police for instance, would have the opportunity to have civilian jobs as police, firefighters or paramedics without have to go through additional credentialing requirements for the state.

Since the two organizations have been working together, the NCNG now serves as a member of the N.C. Back to Work grant review board, which just published a summary of 50 community colleges offering 23 different credentialing programs. Being members of this board ensures the NCNG maintains a presence and fosters direct relationships with community colleges throughout the state.

In addition to the Back to Work Program, other programs being developed include trucking, plumbing, electrical, supply, cook, and IT.

The On the Job (OJT) Apprenticeship initiative is the second program the NCNGEEC is working on in order to show job seekers what available apprenticeship programs are available in the state and which employers those opportunities are attached.

The program is focused on working directly with companies to offer apprenticeships and OJT, to shorten training duration, to fund training for service members and offer train to hire programs. In partnership they have completed 31 programs and are in the process of developing three more, to include the first ever IT/ Cyber security program.

In addition to these collaborations, the NCNGEEC continues to host Veteran Career Days, a series of career workshops that focus on providing information to job seeking NCNG members about résumé writing, interview techniques and how to correlate military training and experience into a civilian occupation; the next event will take place on Jan.15-16.

The NCNGEEC has essentially hit the ground running since last July and they continue to work hard in order to find jobs for NCNG service members.

For more information or to make an appointment with a representative of the NCNGEEC, visit their

website at: <http://www.nc.ngb.army.mil/Careers/Pages/ER.aspx> or follow them on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/ncngeducationandemploymentcenter> and Twitter at: @NCNGEdandEmploy.

EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: For any questions, please contact the North Carolina National Guard Public Affairs Office at ncng.pao@mail.mil or by phone at (919) 664-6242. For more NCNG news, visit our website: www.nc.ngb.army.mil/. To become a Facebook fan of the NCNG, please visit www.facebook.com/NCnationalguard or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/NCnationalguard. To view additional pictures from this and other events, visit www.flickr.com/photos/ncngpao.

American Jobs for America's Heroes

Employers are welcome to post jobs for the National Guard and other military veterans at no cost to employers or applicants. Job postings are provided directly to employment counselors in the state National Guard commands and other military branches. Postings can be submitted throughout the year - this is an ongoing campaign.

To learn more and register for posting, please visit:

www.CenterForAmerica.org

American Jobs for America's Heroes is a nonprofit campaign managed by the Center for America, a 501(c)(3) organization, under a written agreement with the **Army National Guard**.