

Pathways for Heroes

Supporting the career development of military veterans and spouses

A Department of Labor funded project

www.borderplexjobs.com

Bridging the Gap

Every year, 19,000 soldiers are discharged from the military, leave Fort Bliss, and enter civilian life - including employment. But not every soldier who leaves has the knowledge of transferring their military skills into a civilian role. From expressing their accomplishments in roles that are jargon-heavy and specific to the industry to assimilating back into civilian life, which may be more unstructured than they're used to, veterans often need further support to launch their careers outside of the military.

To support the veterans leaving Fort Bliss and looking for employment in the El Paso area, Workforce Solutions Borderplex launched the Pathways for Heroes programs, supporting the career endeavors of local veterans and military spouses. Veterans and transitioning service personnel must be within six months pre-transition and up to four years post-transition.

Military Spouse Support

Through the Pathways for Heroes program, Workforce Solutions Borderplex also allocates funding to support military spouses, who may struggle with career development due to the unpredictable, nomadic lifestyle many military families have. WSB will work to connect them with the same career development opportunities to help them grow in their careers. Individuals must be legally married and their spouse must be active duty.

Program Funding



The Pathways for Heroes program is funded through a \$4.7 million grant provided by the Department of Labor with the specific goal of helping transitioning service members to adjust to civilian life.

Collaborators



Workforce Solutions Borderplex is proud to collaborate with local organizations to connect veterans and military spouses with career development opportunities in the community, including:

- El Paso Electric
- TechBit
- HBI (founded by the Homebuilders Association and the Department of Labor)

Pathways for Heroes Services

Through this program, transitioning military personnel have access to a wide range of services to help through their transition, including:



Access to Training and Certification Programs

Participants in the Pathways for Heroes program may receive access to training and certification programs. These programs help to complement the work experience gained in the military and give them an educational background to aid their job search efforts and qualifications. Some common training programs include commercial driver licensure preparation, information technology, project management, and more.



Job Search Assistance

Trained career counselors can provide participants with tailored job search, helping them to identify jobs that align with their career goals and show promise in the market.



Career Placement

Working with local companies, WSB helps participants gain work-based learning opportunities, paid internships, and on-the-job training to help them gain specialized experience and permanent work placements. To support companies offering paid internships and on-the-job training, Workforce Solutions Borderplex will subsidize wages.



One:One Assistance from a Personal Career Counselor

Participants will have the opportunity to work one on one with a personal career counselor who will get to know them and their needs to better support them in their career journeys. Assistance may include resume and cover letter writing support, job search assistance, career counseling, and more.



Other Support Services

Participants will also gain access to support services to break down other barriers they may face, including obtaining tools (such as for mechanics), computers, interview attire, and personal protective equipment.

Successes & Outcomes



Since starting the program in November 2023, over 600 individuals have applied to receive career development support. Of these 600, 180 have been eligible to receive support. WSB also has a dedicated employment specialist on base to support those early on in their transition.

One success story to come out of this involves a participant in the program who completed a project management certificate to help him with his career. After receiving his certificate, he returned to the program to teach the same project management course, coming full circle and helping his fellow veterans.

Challenges Overcome

One challenge WSB has experienced with this program is the reluctance of military captains to provide support for transitioning service personnel. In recent years, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic, the military has seen fewer numbers enrolling and persisting with the military, leading to the reluctance of military captains to support these endeavors.