

MORE JOBS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE SPOUSES OF RESERVISTS

Reserve officials recently signed an agreement with Adecco, a staffing and human resources company, to expand the number and types of jobs available to spouses of Reservists.

The program is unique because it is not just for spouses of activated Reservists; it is aimed at all Reserve personnel. There are currently pilot versions of the new program operating in San Diego and Annapolis. Adecco's services are available at branches worldwide at no charge to military families.

For more information, contact Erin Walerko, Program Director for the Adecco Career Accelerator Program at 732-676-0261 or <erin.walerko@adeccona.com>.

CIGARETTE SMOKING, HEAVY DRINKING IS ON THE RISE IN THE MILITARY

Cigarette smoking and heavy drinking are on the rise in the military, particularly among younger troops; and many in the armed forces report feeling stress in their work, a Pentagon health survey reports.

Drug use, however, is holding steady, far below the rate for civilians.

Heavy drinking was most acute among men and younger service members, officials said.

Of the 12,756 troops who responded to the Pentagon's 2002 survey, conducted at 30 military installations worldwide, about one third said they felt a lot of stress in their military duties.

The most frequently cited sources of stress for men were deployment (18.9 percent) and separation from family (18.7 percent); the women cited changes in personal life (21.4 percent), separation from family (21.2 percent), and deployment (19.6). Injuries, illnesses, and workplace accidents were twice as common among those who described themselves as stressed.

GUARD AND RESERVE JOIN LOCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE TO SALUTE EMPLOYERS

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is teaming up with local Chambers of Commerce to salute local employers who have demonstrated exceptional support for their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

Officials say the move is part of a broad

outreach program to provide information and assistance to employers, local professional business organizations, local government officials, and members of the Guard and Reserve.

According to Bob Hollingsworth, ESGR Executive Director, the move marks a shift for the DoD agency, which has generally been considered a resource for members of the Reserve Components.

"Saluting America's employers is the right thing to do, and this is the right time to do it," Mr. Hollingsworth said. "During this time of unprecedented mobilizations of the brave men and women who serve in the National Guard and Reserve, the mission of ESGR has evolved from an emphasis on individual Reservists to their employers."

LEAVE, LEARNING STATEMENTS CHANGED TO HELP REDUCE IDENTITY THEFT

Leave and Earning Statements (LES) for all service members will soon have more protection against identity theft. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service will drop the first five digits of a person's social security number from all hard copy pay statements and checks to guard against identity theft.

Reports of identity theft have substantially increased in recent years according to the Federal Trade Commission, which monitors the issue.

Five years ago, the number of complaints to the FTC was roughly 23,400. By 2001, the rate had more than tripled to about 86,200. Based on figures released last January, the number of complaints of identity theft nearly topped 215,000 for 2003. The Social Security Administration also has taken the same step of eliminating the first five social security numbers on the millions of checks it issues.

NEW AUTHORIZATION PROVIDES LARGEST EXPANSION OF NATIONAL CEMETERIES

The Department of Veterans Affairs has begun the largest expansion of national cemeteries since the Civil War, with the authorization to establish six new sites by 2008.

"Under President Bush's leadership, VA is on the path to meet the burial needs of America's aging veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi. "VA will continue to provide America's veterans

with a dignified and respectful final resting place, now and in the future."

The National Cemetery Act of 2003 authorizes VA to establish new national cemeteries to serve veterans in the areas of Bakersfield, CA; Birmingham, AL; Jacksonville, FL; Sarasota County, FL; Southeastern Pennsylvania; and Columbia-Greenville, SC.

DOD ANNOUNCES CRITERIA FOR NEW GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM MEDALS

The Defense Department has announced final approval of the Global War on Terrorism Medals. These awards recognize the significant contributions that members of the armed forces bring to bear in combating terrorism in all forms throughout the world – for both current and future operations.

The medals come in expeditionary and service versions. The expeditionary medal is for those who deploy to designated combat areas, and the service medal is for those who serve in support of operations to combat terrorism.

Military members can receive and wear both medals as long as they meet the criteria; but only one award of each may be authorized for any individual, so no multiple-award devices will be prescribed.

Moreover, members can't use a single qualifying period of service to justify both awards. They need to establish a unique deployment period for each medal.

Battle stars for both medals may be applicable for personnel who were engaged in actual combat against the enemy "and under circumstances involving grave danger of death or serious bodily injury from enemy action," the criteria say.

But battle stars can be requested only by a combatant commander, and must be approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In terms of wear, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal will be positioned above the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal in precedence. Both medals directly follow the Kosovo Campaign Medal when worn, according to the regulations.

FORE AND AFT:

Chief Journalist Kevin Elliott, USNR, has been named the 2003 Naval Reserve Photographer of the Year and Photographer's Mate First Class Darin Russell, USNR, is the Videographer of the Year. 📷