



## A Spouse's Point of View

By Deb Kloepfel – President, MSCCN



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### Do your homework when looking into virtual office training programs

Many military spouses express an interest in working from home as virtual assistants, yet need some training to understand the basic expectations and requirements of working as a virtual assistant. Before signing up for any type of virtual office training, there are some questions you need to ask :

1. Have you inquired at your nearest military family center about good virtual office assistant programs? Does your family center have any information about the program in which you are interested?
2. Is the virtual assistant certificate an internal piece of paper that states you completed their course - or is the certificate *registered* with an appropriate channel to ensure the certificate is legitimate paperwork to obtain bank loans for your home office endeavor? Is the certificate a legitimate piece of paperwork to employers?
3. Does the virtual assistant program curriculum offer very detailed ways to set up a *legal* home office?
4. Will they supply you with a valid list of employers who will hire independent virtual assistants?
5. Does the curriculum guide the spouse to a complete financial understanding of a start-up business?
6. Does the curriculum set up a support system for spouses just starting out their entrepreneurial effort, especially when things go wrong. In short, is there help before the IRS shows up at their door?

There are several appropriate virtual assistant courses that are free of charge to military spouses. One that is contracted through DoD and free to military spouses is online at <http://www.vsscyberoffice.com/> Others may be excellent also, but ensure you check out all the details including any formal complaints lodged against them before spending any money for virtual office assistant training.

#### Inside this issue:

A SPOUSE'S POINT OF VIEW	1
HIGHLIGHTED COMPANY	2
HIGHLIGHTED SPOUSE – MALE MILITARY SPOUSES	2
MSCCN EMPLOYER NEWS	3
MSCCN TALENT MANAGEMENT GATEWAY	4
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT	4
DEVELOPING RESUMES TO POST	5
ATTENDING JOB FAIRS	6
WHAT I LEARNED AS A TRAILING SPOUSE	7
MILITARY FAMILY MONTH	8

# Highlighted Company

## Raytheon

*Headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts, Raytheon has over 80,000 employees worldwide. If you are a recent college graduate or professional spouse, Raytheon might be the employer for you.*

*From the Raytheon website:*

“Throughout its more than 80-year history, Raytheon Company has been a leader in developing defense technologies and in converting those technologies for use in commercial markets. From its early days as a maker of radio tubes, its adaptation of World War II radar technology to invent microwave cooking, and its development of the first guided missile, Raytheon has successfully built upon its pioneering tradition to become a global technology leader.

Raytheon today is a unique technology company and a world leader in defense electronics, with a broader range of products, service and capabilities than ever before. The proud legacies of Raytheon, E-Systems, Texas Instruments, Hughes Aircraft, Beechcraft and others have

come together to form one company with one vision: to be the most admired defense and aerospace systems supplier through world-class people and technology. With the hard work and dedication of more than 78,000 employees, Raytheon is well-equipped to meet the needs of its customers in over 70 countries ... today, tomorrow and well into the 21st century.

Raytheon Company is an industry leader in defense and government electronics, space, information technology, technical services, and business aviation & special mission aircraft.”

Please browse through the Raytheon website at <http://www.raytheon.com> to learn more about the company and then review application procedures for positions on the <http://www.msccn.org> website in the jobseekers section.

A great job may be waiting for you at Raytheon!

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## Highlighted MSCCN Military Spouse

### The Male Military Spouse by MSCCN Team

backgrounds. Military spouses who are husbands to female military members are from all services and across both components — active and reserve. They also are spouses of retired military members and veterans. They also represent a talented labor pool that is often overlooked by many employers. In addition, they fight the stereotype of military spouses all being female.

What do we know about male military spouses? The **2004 Demographics** and the **First Quadrennial Quality of Life Review** linked to <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/> under *reports* show that:

**Number of spouses: Active = 688,418 Reserve/Guard = 428,363**

Approximately 93 percent of the spouses of Active Duty members are female. Of a total of 428,363 military spouses of Reserve/Guard and the total of 428,346 military spouses for whom the gender is known, the majority (89.6%) are female. Males spouses are in the minority, but only number-wise. The first military spouse placed by MSCCN was a male spouse!

Most spouses of active duty members (75%) have at least some college: 38 percent do not hold a degree, but have some college credit; 12 percent hold Associate degrees; 18 percent hold Bachelor degrees; 7 percent hold advanced degrees. These numbers were not broken out by gender.

MSCCN salutes male military spouses! Just like your military spouse sisters, you serve quietly as a strong force supporting our country's military forces.

# MSCCN Employer News

By Jay Brethen



## Health Net has Job Opportunities

Health Net's behavioral health unit, Managed Health Network (MHN), supports members of the Army, Marines, Navy, and Air Force, as well as Guard and Reserve personnel and their families. "For some military personnel and their families, emotional wounds can be as harmful as physical ones," says **Stu Murphy**, VP, Account Management & Sales, for Health Net's Managed Health Network Government Services (MHNGS), New York City, N.Y.

To address the emotional needs of people in the military, MHN launched an intervention initiative in May 2004. "As we've proven our effectiveness, the demand for our services is increasing rapidly. We've touched over 100,000 lives of service personnel and their families, in the U.S. and abroad, since we began," he notes. "Because it now touches service personnel and their families across the four service branches, we refer to the initiative as Military and Family Life Consulting (MFLC), the same acronym we use for the consultants themselves." MFLC assists in the military's readiness efforts to help the families and the war fighters get ready to do their jobs.

The consultants provide counseling and support to augment the many programs and services the military already has in place. "It's not about therapy—it's about skills," explains **Dr. Ian Shaffer**, chief medical officer, MHN, Pt. Richmond, Calif. "Through MFLC, we provide a wealth of communication skill-building to help create realistic expectations and give military and family members the tools to help reestablish their relationships," he explains. "Isolation is common for both those left behind and those coming and going from active duty," says **Ronnie Weiner**, director, Clinical Programs, MHNGS, New York City, who also spends time as a counselor on the military bases. "We help service people to unburden, to share their combat experiences in a way that helps them get to a more positive place about these events, realizing they're not alone with their experience. We give them tools and resources to help them manage the impact on their lives and the lives of their families.

Parenting skills become vital, as children begin to act out, don't relate to returning parents and add tremendous strain to an already isolated spouse." According to **Jerry Coil**, president, MHN, Point Richmond, "We send out consultants on a rotational basis, from one to three months. So at any given time we have about 100 consultants in the field. We have over 50 in Europe right now." Jerry and Ian travel to the bases across Europe and the U.S. periodically to oversee the programs. "We are in many European countries and the Pacific Rim," Jerry notes. Consultants also visit small units of NATO personnel scattered all over Europe including Norway, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Portugal, Spain and Italy. "It's a very meaningful effort that we are proud to be a part of."

Check out Health Net job opportunities on the MSCCN Gateway!

## MSCCN Is Searching For More Nationwide Employers

MSCCN is requesting referrals of companies interested in hiring military spouses and transitioning military personnel. MSCCN is not DoD-funded and depends on subscription fees from corporate partnerships and charter members. In return, companies receive many benefits including access into the secure MSCCN Talent Management Gateway of candidates. Additionally, that have an opportunity to set up a link to their career site, which is best for nationwide employers, or to have unlimited job posting (for smaller businesses and businesses without a career website).

If you know a company interested in tapping into the MSCCN labor pool of military spouses, please ask them to visit the MSCCN website at [www.msccn.org](http://www.msccn.org) or email the Corporate Development Team at [outreach@msccn.org](mailto:outreach@msccn.org)

Thank you!

# *MSCCN Talent Management Gateway –*

## *The Importance of Timely Communication*

*by Colleen Saffron*



It seems we are all so busy these days. Throwing a job hunt into the day-to-day activity of living makes things even more hectic. At MSCCN, we on the Gateway have dedicated ourselves to doing everything in our power to help our applicants find the perfect career opportunity. This is a joint endeavor involving MSCCN corporate partners, MSCCN staff, and the applicants themselves.

When MSCCN sends a communication, whether it includes pre-screen questions, next step letters, or update requests, we need timely return communication from candidates to support them in their search. Pre-screens and next step letters can take some time but are key tools our corporate partners are using in the MSCCN system. Along with your resume, a hiring manager will read your forms and pre-screen answers to determine if you are the type of person they want to fill their position.

### *MSCCN Volunteer Spotlight —*

#### *Debi Clarkson, the MSCCN Webmaster*

MSCCN is extremely pleased to highlight Debi Clarkson, the MSCCN webmaster, in this issue's volunteer spotlight. Debi, spouse of a retired Navy Captain, is a key member of the MSCCN team. When asked why she volunteers her services, her answer was worth sharing with all!



“With over 28 years of volunteer experience, I am pleased to join MSCCN's team as its webmaster. Following in my mother's footsteps, I feel that each of us has a responsibility to give back to our communities with whatever talents we are blessed.

Keeping pre-screen answers career-focused and making sure they do not include answers that would cause a possible employer to think twice about hiring you are imperative. Returning pre-screens also shows you are truly interested in partnering with MSCCN in your job hunt.

Next step letters are the ones that direct you to our corporate partners to apply for a position with them. If you don't apply how do we know you want the job? The reward for taking a few minutes to send a timely communication to MSCCN staff could lead to a great career!!

We look forward to a great relationship with every one of our applicants through timely communications!

I have had the opportunity to serve in a variety of capacities and all were worthwhile endeavors, both in civilian and military arenas. However, my heart goes out to those who serve our nation, who put themselves in harm's way for the sake of the United States of America, and to their families who help carry the weight of that commitment. Military spouses are exceptionally dedicated to their families and communities. They are unsung heroes and they have been treated harshly in the working world! That is why I jumped at Deb Kloepfel's call to help this very deserving group. MSCCN empowers military spouses by opening new career avenues and I wholeheartedly support MSCCN's mission!”

Thank you, Debi, for sharing your time and talents to help all military families!

# Developing Résumés to Post to Job Boards

by John Lucas, Senior Recruiter with Chenega Technology Services Corporation, Springfield, VA.

*Mr. Lucas volunteers for the MSCCN Resume Coalition. MSCCN encourages applicants to post resumes wherever they find good job opportunities. Unlike other well-known resume-posting websites, the MSCCN Gateway is not a regular job board – it is a network with partnered companies' recruiters. With that in mind, Mr. Lucas offers his advice on what to consider when posting resumes to regular job boards.. Below is a continuation of his article from our last issue.*

If you are using acronyms be sure to spell out what it means at least once; FSO can mean Facility Security Officer or Foreign Service Officer. Always spell out acronyms - it will give you extra visibility.

UNIX programmers can come in different flavors UNIX, AIX, HPUX; if you are a UNIX programmer I would mention UNIX, the variations of UNIX you have worked on and other variations that you know. Here is another example: C++ programmers can work on JAVA programming with minimal training. The phrase "Experience C++ programmer trainable in JAVA" will get you more views than just mentioning C++. This holds true for any other skill sets in other industries, not just programming.

Finally, while the old adage of a two page resume still is applicable I would recommend expanding your **online generic** resume to three or even four pages. You will need the extra space to expand on the key (search) words in the body of your resume. Also it may pay to devote a separate and last page where you can list your skill sets and variations of your skills. Remember the more times you can list a skill word or phrase the closer to the top of the search a resume will come up. Here is a caution if you are a programmer and just fill up a page with UNIX for 100 times I am not going to pay attention to your resume, everything should be done within reason and moderation for all skill sets.

I know I said in the previous issue that it is fine to post a longer resume online but that still can get out of hand if you have more than one skill set and are looking for work covering two professions. Say you have a background in retail and also medical office work (or in my case Human Resources and recruiting). While the skill sets in both jobs may be cross-transferable most people will not spend the time to figure it out. So you may need to write a resume that highlights your skills in retail and another one that highlights your skills in medicine and then post both of them for people to search on. This is one reason why you will need two resume accounts. Resume accounts are usually issued based on your email ID.

You know that recruiters search for resumes by key words and location; they also search by date posted. Recruiters are most likely to pick a recently posted resume to call first rather than an older resume. There is an assumption that the older a resume is the more likely a person has found a job. By refreshing your resume you tend to make it newer and it move up the date list. There are several ways to refresh your resume; some sites allow you to do it with a refresh button. I tend to do it by re-editing the resume and reposting it. It is fairly simple. All I do is add a period at the end of the resume and the next time I remove it and it gets refreshed.

I want you to be careful with this advice and use it in moderation. In the Metro DC area there is a candidate who has three different resumes online in at least two different sites and he reposts them every day. Do you think I am reading his resume anymore? No, I am not! The most you should refresh your resume is once a week. If you are in a smaller market or a targeted niche refresh it less frequently than that.

I hope these tips help you to think about different ways to manage your online job search. These are only suggestions and it is up to you to determine which ones best apply to your situation. Also remember online job searching should be a small part of your day-to-day search. No matter how many times you have sent out your resume or have it posted and refreshed you still need to network, attend job fairs, and do a proactive search based on your needs.

# Attending Job Fairs

by Lori Cleymans



*Many job seekers do not prepare adequately to make the most of job fair attendance. Some recruiters may hire on-the-spot, while others will be assessing candidates to weed out of consideration or invite for follow-on interviews. Those job seekers who prepare ahead of time will have the greatest chance for good results from job fair attendance.*

For a job fair, the first task is to do as much research as possible on the employers who will be attending. Find out who is sponsoring the job fair and give them a call or go to their web site and get a listing of employers. Then research the employers to find out what they do, what positions they might have open and prepare some questions to ask the recruiters. If you are interested in getting an administrative job or customer service, tailor your resume to highlight those skills.

Another idea is to make some business cards and on the back put a very brief summary of your skills. For example, the front would have all your contact information and on the back "Public Relations Specialist with strong administrative and organizational skills." Then put (if you have room, make sure it's easy to read) one or two bullets with your major accomplishment such as developing the new filing system or recruiting the volunteers. Whatever it is you want the employer to know about you.

Then at the fair, go dressed for an interview. Take a nice, professional notebook, pen (don't just steal their pens and candy), your questions for each employer, several resumes, and try to get business cards from the recruiters. If they don't have a card with their name, try to find out their name. What you do, the same day or the very next day, is send your tailored resume (pick up job announcements if they have them, or try to ask detailed questions about the job, let them know you'll send them a tailored resume as well) and address your cover letter to that recruiter. So take good notes! You would write: Dear Mr./Ms. So and So: I spoke with you yesterday, April 13 at the (name of the job fair - they go to so many they don't remember where they've been) and you mentioned the position of (name of job). Here is my tailored resume that we discussed.

Remember to be to the point about what you do, prepare a 30 second commercial about yourself (practice with spouse or friend so it flows nicely), ask questions, but don't ask them what their company does. Let them know you've already checked them out online. They like that! It shows you're serious and you take initiative.

***Action is the foundational key to all success.***

**Pablo Picasso**

# What I Learned as a Trailing Spouse

by Anne Wight, GCDF, CFLE, CCRR



Last year, I retired from federal service after working for the military as a civilian. My husband, a retired Air Force officer, is deep into his second career and anxiously facing one more move and career transition. Why are we moving? My husband and I are excitedly building our retirement home to finally “settle down” near family.

As I prepare for one more move, I find myself looking back at the challenges I faced and what I did right as a trailing military spouse. My biggest challenge was faced as a young spouse of an Air Force officer at a time when spouses (mostly wives back then) were not supposed to work outside of the home. A Blue Ribbon Panel on spouse employment two decades ago changed that mentality and encouraged all spouses to have the freedom to work or not work. Military spouses today enjoy that freedom to work or not work with no impact on the military member’s career.

Here is what I think I did right while living the military lifestyle:

1. I was flexible and looked for job opportunities that could utilize transferable skills, even if they were not in my normal field.
2. I loved learning new things and took advantage of educational and training opportunities. I believed in expanding my knowledge so strongly that I usually paid for courses and training myself. I also paid for my national certifications and teaching license renewals. I invested in myself.
3. I believed in the old adage to “bloom where you are planted” and tried to make the most of every new location. I traveled and enjoyed seeing many new places.
4. Although I started late in life, I learned the value of saving for my retirement.
5. I learned all about credit and credit scores and became a better manager of my own finances.
6. I kept every pay statement and official personnel document.

What I did not do well:

1. As an introvert, I never spent much time socializing or networking. I had my own circle of friends, but did not seek out others who could mentor me. I learned most things the hard way.
2. Along the same line, I focused intently on my work (rarely taking lunch breaks or talking to co-workers down the hall) to my detriment by not making myself known to others. Networking and self-promotion were not in my vocabulary and should have been, at least on a small scale.
3. I did not start saving for retirement soon enough.
4. Although I kept every important document, I was not organized. Finding specific documents was a challenge.

Although there are other things that could be added to each list, I wanted to share these particular ones with other “trailing” military spouses. My best advice is to invest in yourself and to save for your future. Along the way, get out and enjoy every new location and don’t forget to network! You’ll look back and be glad you enjoyed each moment as it happened, seized every opportunity, and prepared for the time when you could settle down.

## Did You Know About Military Family Month?

Military Family Week originally started during Thanksgiving Week each November as Military Family Week. In 1996, the Armed Services YMCA (ASYMCA) expanded Military Family Week into Military Family Month. Please visit the ASYMCA website at <http://www.asymca.org> to learn more about Military Family Month.

**MSCCN thanks all employers who honor military families year round by supporting the employment of transitioning military and military spouses.**

*"I send greetings to America's servicemen and servicewomen and their families as you celebrate Military Family Month, sponsored by the Armed Services YMCA of the USA." President Bush*

## Supporting America's Military Families

Operation Military Child Care and Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood help military families find and pay for quality child care in their communities. For more information, call **1-800-424-2246** or visit [www.naccrra.org/military](http://www.naccrra.org/military).

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