



TRANSITIONING VETERANS: MAKING THE LEAP INTO CIVILIAN LIFE





KRISTIN GASPAR
 SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT
 SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Dear Residents of San Diego County:

Our region has the third highest population of military veterans in the United States and it is the top destination in the country where Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans are choosing to settle after their service. As these men and women transition from the uniform to civilian clothes, it is crucial that our region have ample resources for them to succeed. This guide will highlight some of the valuable programs and support services available around San Diego County for our Military and Transitioning Military and their families.

Our County now has three Military and Veterans Resource Centers that serve our men and women and help them navigate what could be a daunting and stressful time of their lives. Located in our Live Well Centers throughout the region and in partnership with our community providers, support services are available for employment, health, benefits, education and family caregiver assistance. We want to honor the many sacrifices made by our service members by making their transition into public life as seamless as possible.

To those of you who served or are serving, thank you for the extraordinary sacrifices you and your families have made for our country. You have my deepest respect and gratitude.

Sincerely,

Kristin Gaspar
 Supervisor, Third District
 San Diego County Board of Supervisors



Service Members Leaving Military Life Face Big Adjustments

■ By BRAD GRAVES

San Diego County is home to the largest concentration of military forces in the world, and as such it sees its share of military retirements. Every year in the county, more than 20,000 people leave military service and take on new lives as civilians.

The jump always has its challenges.

The transition can be difficult when a person trades the rigidly structured life of the military for the less structured life of the civilian world.

The military provides some degree of information that can help soldiers, sailors and Marines make the best of their transitions.

Private industry, particularly larger companies, has programs to help new hires get acclimated — provided, of course, that the candidate can demonstrate his or her potential.

Government sponsored programs can also help the transition, as can private or charitable programs. The following pages offer information on some of the programs available to veterans in San Diego County.

Military Mindset Is In Demand

Often a veteran doesn't have to go too far to get a job. He or she can make the switch to federal, state or local government work.

There is much to be said for hiring veterans.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Dalton S. Swanbeck, courtesy of U.S. Marine Corps
A Sailor assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer stands at parade rest manning the rails while departing Naval Base San Diego.

“They have proven leadership skills, ability to work in a team, strong work ethic, integrity and respect for procedures,” said **John Challenger**, CEO with **Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc.**, in a statement released by his company in 2015. “Most workers’ day-to-day job tasks can be

taught. It’s these soft skills that are difficult to teach and what makes veterans so valuable.” Challenger, Gray & Christmas is an outplacement firm based in Chicago.

The military has long been advertised as a place to learn a trade, and many skills are transferable to the civilian world of work.

For many veterans, particularly those that enter military service directly out of high school, skills learned in the military are much of what they bring to the table.

Communicating those skills is critical, Challenger said.

“The most difficult part of the transition may be translating one’s military experience into terms that are meaningful to civilian employers,” the executive said. “These men and women have skills and experience that are in demand, but they just don’t know how to describe them in a way that non-military recruiters understand. Luckily, there are a growing number of programs and services that help with this.”

Of course, there are other soft skills that transitioning veterans might need to brush up on. They include networking as well as how to give a good interview. Some observers say veterans aren’t too good at boasting or talking up their accomplishments. However, that can be necessary when hunting for a job on the other side of the fence, in the civilian world.

The Fall and Rise of Job Opportunity

Sailors and Marines who leave military service in 2019 have an advantage that many older veterans could only have

➔ *Military page 42*

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112,500

Active Duty Military in San Diego County

100%

Lower 4 Ranks (E1-E4) Classified As Low-Income by US Department of Housing

2-3 Years

How Frequently Military Families Move

86%

Military Spouses Unemployed or Underemployed

38%

Service Members Have Less Than \$2,000 in Savings

9 in 10

Military Members Currently in Debt

62%

Experience Stress due to Current Financial Situation

1 in 10

Food Bank Guests Have Military Members in their family

Locally Founded. Privately Funded. Impact Driven.



SUPPORT THE ENLISTED PROJECT

Helping Military Families Every Day

Ranked #29 nationally among charities that support military and veteran families, STEP was founded by Veterans who believe that with the right tools and knowledge, every service member can build a strong financial future while retaining their basic needs. Learn more about how you can help those sacrificing so much to serve our country at stepsocal.org.

Building financial self-sufficiency with our young military and veteran families through financial counseling, education, and grants.

Stepsocal.org | (858) - 695 - 6810 | 501(c)(3) Nonprofit | EIN: 20-3051279 | CFC: 71984 | 4-Star Charity Navigator

Courage to Call

A PROGRAM OF
mhs MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

Courage to Call is a veteran led San Diego County funded program that serves active duty, veterans, reservists, guardsmen and their families.

We can help find supportive information, access resources and referrals to services throughout San Diego County. Our focus is to provide prevention and early intervention services to improve mental wellness.

Our veteran peer line is available 24/7 to offer confidential care—just call **1-877-698-7838** or dial **2-1-1**. When in need of assistance, a veteran peer specialist and a family support partner are also available to meet in person or by phone. For veterans that are facing multiple barriers our Veteran Peer Navigators provide guidance and support for up to 18 months.

Types of assistance may include: Food, Housing, Employment, Transition Support, Clothing, Legal Resources, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse services.

Currently, Courage to Call provides weekly mental health services to student veterans. We also provide training and resources for the re-entry of incarcerated veterans. Courage to Call coordinates the Veterans Treatment Court mentor program where veteran mentors generously give their time and dedication in supporting a veteran getting a second chance.

In addition, Courage to Call organizes food distributions twice a month which provides food to approximately 200 households at various locations countywide. The Courage to Call program has partnered with the VFW and many other organizations in hosting food distributions. Through our partnership with SDVC FLAG and the American Legion, Courage to Call distributed over 500 scooters from Razor USA to military and veteran families. We hope to continue this valuable partnership in serving the military and veteran community.



In partnership with

Visit Courage2Call.org
Call 1-877-698-7838 or Dial 2-1-1

VVSD
 Veterans Village
 of San Diego

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Our programs provide financial assistance for housing, childcare costs, and more.

When you think of veterans, do you think of women? We do...



"Foundation for Women Warriors has been there for me when I needed it most. Last Spring, I was in my final semester of my bachelor's degree at Cal State. I was working and taking a full load of classes while raising my son by myself. I was having trouble paying for extended care hours at my child's daycare and was only weeks away from being completed with my degree program. I knew that I could not quit school and wanted to graduate on time. Foundation for Women Warriors provided me childcare assistance, mentorship, and so much more. If it were not for this amazing foundation, I would not be a college graduate today. I recently accepted a new job and am now enrolled in a master's program."

- Rebecca O., USMC Veteran

WOMEN ARE THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF THE VETERAN POPULATION.

IN 2014 WE SERVED 229 WOMEN AND CHILDREN. IN 2018 WE SERVED 1140 WOMEN AND CHILDREN.



Would you like to support women veterans?

Visit our website to learn about our mission and how you can help:
foundationforwomenwarriors.org



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I want hands-on training.

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TCI has on-site job assistance with over 90% employment rate.

I want affordable tuition.

TCI programs offer tuition free and low cost programs for those who qualify.

Success doesn't have to take forever! Find out how to get into the hottest careers.

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- BrewTech Technician
- Child Visitation Monitor
- CNC Operation and Programming
- Engineering Technician
- Homeland Security
- Machining Technology
- Massage Therapy
- Phlebotomy Technician
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- Unmanned Systems (ROV/Drone)
- Veterinary Assistant
- Welding



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TECHNOLOGY CAREER INSTITUTE



Serving Uncommon Heroes

The County of San Diego is home to over 1.2 million residents who are associated with the military. This includes veterans, active duty, and their family members. This accounts for 35 percent of the 3.4 million County residents. In the past 5 years, over 30,000 veterans returning from the Iraq and Afghanistan war have settled in San Diego County ranking San Diego as the number one destination nationwide for all returning veterans. Veterans often find themselves lost and overwhelmed with the myriad of support services in the community, and navigating these services can be difficult. Providing military and veterans services to this population and making it easier to navigate and access these services is a major priority for the County's Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA). A strong veteran outreach program is critical to providing needed services to this large veteran population. OMVA is currently overseeing three innovative and groundbreaking veteran outreach programs, the Veteran Services Representative (VSR) Outreach program, the Vet-Connect program, and the Military and Veterans Resource Center (MVRC) program. The VSR outreach and the Vet-Connect program is a joint initiative that leverages County and City Library resources to address the need for increased support to military and veterans in San Diego County. It is a winning partnership that brings military and veteran support services closer to where military and veterans reside and helps encourage veterans to apply for benefits that they are entitled to.





es With A Common Virtue



A one-stop-shop Military and Veterans Resource Center (MVRC) was part of the OMVA's vision and strategic plan in 2014. In 2015 the County opened its first MVRC in the North Inland region. There are now three MVRC's located in different regions of the County. Each of these MVRC's is co-located within a Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) Live Well Center providing social services including a Family Resource Center, child welfare services, child support services, adult protective services, and In Home Support Services (IHSS). The MVRC's provides office space and administrative support to veteran support organizations. Veteran services within the MVRC include benefits counseling, employment, transitional housing for homeless veterans, finance, legal, hospice care, healthcare, and caregiving. The Military & Veterans Resource Centers provides a single location where military and veterans can access the full spectrum of veteran support services. Bringing veteran support services to the regions means bringing these services closer to home for a growing population of veteran. An added benefit of bringing these services closer to the Veteran in the different regions is that it helps encourage veterans to seek benefits that they are entitled and would not have, otherwise, sought these support services. The County of San Diego's Office of Military and Veterans Affairs is dedicated to serving those who have served, **UNCOMMON HEROES WITH A COMMON VIRTUE.**





S.D.M.F.C.

SAN DIEGO MILITARY FAMILY COLLABORATIVE

San Diego Military Family Collaborative (SDMFC) is a collection of over 200 participating members dedicated to serving military families, convened by SAY San Diego.



SDMFC Monthly Convenings

Hear from guest speakers, interact with expert panelists, participate in collaborative activities, and network with service organizations in monthly forums dedicated to providing military families and service providers valuable information and up-to-date resources about the military-connected community.

SDMFC 9th Annual Summit

Join elected officials, military leadership, business professionals and service providers in an opportunity to address some of the most pressing issues facing military families and develop action plans to create long-lasting solutions. Sponsorship opportunities available by inquiring with SDMFC Director, Daniel Romero:

dromero@saysandiego.org

SDMFC Community Workshops

SDMFC invites all military families to participate in our community-focused workshops. Courses provide support for military spouses transitioning to civilian life, as well as family forums focused on safety, health, and wellness.

Get Involved!

- ATTEND Convenings or Action Team events
- PARTICIPATE in our programs
- INVITE others to collaborate in our activities
- SHARE our information
- GIVE by supporting our efforts through grants, sponsorships, and donations
- VISIT www.sdmilitaryfamily.org for more info
- FOLLOW @SDMilFam (Twitter/FB/Insta)

Want to learn more? Contact:
info@sdmilitaryfamily.org

SDMFC Members include:



Program & Administration provided by
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Contact Us: 3487 Santo Road, San Diego 92124
(858) 496-0044



Saved in America has one mission: to find missing children before they are lured into the dark world of child sex trafficking. In San Diego, sex trafficking is now a nearly \$1 billion dollar industry. Saved in America is a non-profit organization founded by Pastor Joseph A. Travers. The former Los Angeles Police Detective is now a licensed private investigator with a team of 30 retired law enforcement officers, former Navy SEALs, and Marine Recon Raiders who are also licensed and insured private investigators. All of them volunteer their time and use their professional skills to track down missing children around the country.

Travers and his team assist parents and law enforcement agencies when every second counts, and they do not charge a dime. Runaway and missing children are highly at risk of being trafficked for sex. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates that 1 in 7 runaways are likely victims of sexual exploitation. **Approximately 60% of all runaways are approached by a trafficker within the first 48 hours.**

Since December 2014, SIA has helped locate and safely return 200 missing children from California to Florida. 60% of all recovered children were found before being trafficked. For victims of sexual exploitation, Saved in America assists in procuring legal representation, safe housing, and rehabilitative therapy.

The approach and techniques used by Saved in America has been a model on how to prevent child sex trafficking in other parts of the country by focusing on runaway and missing children. SIA has taught its investigative techniques to the Human Smuggling & Trafficking Center in Washington, DC, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Licensed Investigator Associations in Texas, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, and the Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, California.

For more information, please visit our website SavedinAmerica.org or call our hotline, (760) 348-8808.





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WHAT HAPPENS TO SAN DIEGO'S ILL AND INJURED WARRIORS WHEN THEY CAN NO LONGER BE IN THE FIGHT?

When Freedom Station opened its doors in 2011, it became the first transitional housing facility of its kind - a place for injured warriors to heal, learn new skills, and successfully transition to civilian life.

Dozens of San Diego's veterans have relied on our supportive transitional environment to begin their new journey outside the military. This fall, Warrior Foundation will proudly open our second facility, Freedom Station II... with your help.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Donate today to help make Freedom Station II a beautiful, safe and welcoming place worthy of the brave military heroes who will call it home.

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WARRIOR FOUNDATION
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The Veterans Beer Club (VBC) a monthly rotation of gatherings with fellow active, retired, reserve, and Guard veterans at different brewery and/or other locations in a relaxed environment. The VBC purpose is three-fold:

1. Assist transitioning service members through networking, discussions of important events, introductions to industries across the region, and ensuring service members are personally introduced to leaders in aforementioned groups. The VBC believes by supporting, vetting, and assisting noteworthy organizations that legitimately help veterans this will also help the entire community.
2. Translate our military service to community service, ensuring we continue our leadership into non-profit, volunteer, and civil service organizations.
3. Continue our sense of camaraderie, thus safeguarding the bonds established during our military service, and ensuring there is a safety net of resources for veterans. VBC will continue to interface with senior veterans and business leaders in the community, and leverage their passion for assisting fellow veterans.

Who We Are

- “We are beer aficionados and servant leaders with a networking problem”
- The culture VBC seeks is a relaxed, informal veteran-networking environment
- Provide a venue for honest dialogue, feedback, and endorsement of those organizations who truly follow through on their promise to
- “help or hire” veterans
- Serve transitioning veterans by providing and endorsing quality upcoming events; and those to avoid
- Each member will strive to bring in additional veterans; and VBC will selectively invite influential community and corporate leaders
- to discuss what they need and what they know veterans need to do for a successful transition
- Measure success by individual transition successes (i.e. interviews)
- Maintain social media pages to disseminate important information
- Guarantee a strict policy of ensuring our membership is not publicized, monetized, or used for profit

Founders

The Veterans Beer Club (VBC) was created from the collaboration between three retired Marine Corps officers, Kevin Cortes, Brian Grana, and Phil Kendro. The concept of keeping in contact with fellow veterans and bringing veteran-friendly civilian workforce members together was a recurring topic of conversation between them. The first “official” VBC was held at Second Chance Brewing Company in Rancho Bernardo, CA with five ex-officio members in June 2016.

Follow us at: www.theveteransbeerclub.com
Facebook and Instagram @veteransbeerclub





Every year, over 22,000 military members, stationed in San Diego County, leave active duty service, and a third of them would like to stay in the local area. They are assets to our region, but can also face challenges with transition especially related to post-service employment, housing, educational opportunities, health & wellness and creating social/neighborhood connections in their new civilian community.

While many resources are available to help transitioning service members, recent veterans and their spouses, they are typically unaware of them or unaware of which ones would be best suited to their unique transition needs. At the same time, these support organizations are often unable to access military bases or locate veterans once they leave active duty service. **zero8hundred** was formed in 2015 to address this significant and troubling gap.

Serving as the county's most comprehensive and individualized resource hub, **zero8hundred** provides 1:1 peer counselors – trained specialists who are veterans or military spouses themselves – to transitioning service members, and their spouses, to develop and execute their unique transition plans. These Resource Specialists

assist in connecting them to the vetted services and resources best suited to their individual needs up to 9 months prior to separation from active duty, through transition and for up to 12 months post -service to ensure their transition success, overall well-being and self-sufficiency as our community's newest full-time members.

Program Highlights

- **zero8hundred** has been introduced to more than 35,000 service members at over 850 on-base military transition classes and through community classes
- **zero8hundred** has enrolled over 3,600 transitioning service members (active duty as well as Reserve and National Guard), recent veterans and their spouses in the program to receive case management and transition support referrals.
 - 84% of those who received personalized resource navigation services reported they **had no unmet transition needs 12 months post-separation.**
 - 68% who listed "Jobs" as their top need, and who received personalized resource navigation services, were employed within 3 months post-separation and **88%, of those looking for jobs, were employed within 12 months post-separation.**
 - 91%, who received personalized resource navigation services, reported **increased confidence and knowledge of transition resources available to them.**
 - 84% agreed **they are more resilient and self-sufficient** after working with a **zero8hundred** Resource Specialist.

www.zero8hundred.org • info@zero8hundred.org

Military:

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dreamed about. They are arriving at the job market with unemployment levels at record lows, and employers hunting furiously for good people.

In California, the recession year of 2008 began with a veteran unemployment rate of 4.3%. That rate steadily rose to a peak of 12.2% in July 2011. Since then the California veteran unemployment rate has dipped as low as 2.5%, in August of last year. It has since ticked up to 3.0% in February.

The national unemployment rate among veterans and non-veterans is 3.6%, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The unemployment rate for female veterans declined to 3.0% in 2018, while the unemployment rate for male veterans stayed level at 3.5%, the federal agency said.

There were an estimated 19.2 million military veterans in the United States in 2018. Of that number, 9.1 million are employed in civilian work. Another 326,000 are unemployed. The rest of the 9.7 million are retired, or otherwise not part of the labor force.

Of those 326,000 unemployed veterans, 54% were in the age range of 25 to 54 years old. An additional 6% were in the ages of 18 to 24. The final 40% were age 55 or older.

The unemployment rate of veterans varies from a low of 1.4% in Iowa to a high of 6.5% in the District of Columbia.

California sits near the low end of that range, with an unemployment rate of 2.7%. The Golden State has a veteran popula-

tion of 1.7 million. Some 2.7% of that population — or 22,000 people — were unemployed while 894,000 were not in the labor force.

Nationally, veterans with service-connected disabilities had a jobless rate of 5.2%, higher than the 3.5% rate for veterans with no disability, the Bureau of Labor

California Veterans Unemployment Rate



Source: California Employment Development Department

Statistics said.

As of August, roughly 1 in 3 employed veterans with service-connected disabilities worked in the public sector, compared with about 1 in 5 veterans with no disability.

It may be no surprise that once they leave the service, veterans like to put down roots in San Diego.

San Diego County has a veteran population of 241,000, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 107,000 of those veterans are in the labor force, and that locally, veteran unemployment is at 5%.

Founded in 2003 by a retired US Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel, PKL Services, Inc. has always been dedicated to serving our military and supporting our veterans.

We understand the unique work experience, background, and skill set that veterans possess. And we are proud to offer our employees the opportunity to continue using those hard earned skills to support various military endeavors around the world.

With contracts in various locations worldwide, serving both the US Government and Foreign Military Sales, our employees are able to utilize their dedicated skill sets to continue to support military missions. Our employees benefit from having a stable location that stays consistent with the contract while working with other veterans who appreciate the same experiences and background.

We are committed to our employees, and assisting them in that transition from their military careers to the civilian workforce.

PKL has consistently employed a workforce comprised of over 90% former military personnel. These employees ensure we maintain or exceed customer standards for readiness, compliance, and deliverables.

The dedication and skilled work of our employees has allowed PKL to grow significantly as a company since it began 16 years ago. We are excited for the future of the company and to be able to hire more former military personnel, providing them the stability and benefits they seek while encouraging them to further develop their careers and skill sets.

To find out more about PKL or to apply for any open positions, please visit pklservices.com/employment

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