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"Jobless Rate For Military Veterans Higher Than National Average"

WASHINGTON, Sep 27, 2000 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- With the national jobless rate at a record low, employment opportunities for America's transitioning military personnel and veterans should be abundant, the chief executive officer and president of VetJobs.com told a U.S. House of Representatives Veterans Affairs subcommittee today.

"Yet the unemployment rate for veterans is substantially higher than the national average," VetJobs' Theodore L. Daywalt, a retired Navy Captain, told the subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. "Corporations are simply not aware of the tremendous talents that exist among veterans in the workforce."

The subcommittee, chaired by Congressman Terry Everett of Alabama, an Air Force veteran, is holding a series of hearings on improving employment opportunities for the 200,000 active duty military personnel who transition out of the armed forces each year, plus the 15 million veterans already in the workforce.

Daywalt was invited to testify before the subcommittee on how VetJobs is helping veterans find employment.

Owned and operated by United States military veterans and headquartered in the Atlanta suburb of Marietta, VetJobs is the largest resume database and job posting Internet firm for U.S. military veterans, their spouses and dependents.

There are no charges to veterans for using the site.

"Many corporate recruiters never consider military veterans for employment because they've had no exposure to America's armed forces," Daywalt said. "We've had a volunteer military for more than 30 years, the draft is a distant memory and the last war was a decade ago."

Daywalt said after World War II, one out of every 10 Americans was a veteran or on active duty.

Today, that number has shrunk to one veteran for every 147 Americans, he said.

"The best known veteran in America is Tom Hanks," Daywalt said, referring to actor Hank's portrayal of United States Army Captain John Miller in the Academy-award winning film "Saving Private Ryan."

Quoting July 2000 jobless rates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, Daywalt said the unemployment rate for male veterans discharged since 1994 is 7 percent, compared to the overall U.S. unemployment rate of 4.5 percent. Among black and Hispanic male veterans, unemployment is 6.8 percent and 8.1 percent respectively, for the same time period. The unemployment rate for female veterans is 5.9 percent.

"Our armed forces are no longer soldiers in foxholes and sailors aboard gunboats, but a high-tech military staffed by men and women skilled in state-of-the-art technology, leadership and teamwork," Daywalt said.

"Did you know that 92 percent of active duty military use personal computers and 51 percent use LAN systems?" Daywalt asked the committee. "All major military operating systems - control and command, administrative, logistics, intelligence and weapons - are highly computerized and require superbly trained and motivated people to operate them."

"We firmly believe that message needs to find its way into America's corporate board rooms," Daywalt said.

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