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## **"Web Sites Help Military Spouses Navigate Job Market"**

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Military spouses are getting help online with one of the biggest problems they face when they move: finding a job.

The Air Force Web site Crossroads, at <http://www.famnet.com>, and two commercial Web sites now have gateways for spouses to post resumes and search for jobs at a variety of companies and federal agencies. They also can get information on job-searching skills such as interviewing and resume writing, and links to other Web sites of interest.

"I think it's great they're trying to do something for us," said Susan House, the wife of a Navy master chief stationed at Naval Air Station, Atlanta. Another Navy wife told her about the commercial VetJobs.com site ([www.vetjobs.com](http://www.vetjobs.com)) and she was posting her resume Dec. 21. The other commercial site is Transition Assistance Online, at <http://www.taoline.com>. House's job search in the Atlanta area has not been successful over the past several months.

"A lot of employers I've talked to are scared when they see my resume, and see how I've bounced around to so many different places," House said. "I think companies that post on these sites understand all that, and I won't have to face that hurdle."

Two months ago, a potential employer told House he didn't think he could hire her because he didn't know how long she would stay, she said. Famnet.com's job search service is open only to Air Force spouses, and it requires a registration that crosschecks with Air Force information at the Defense Manpower Data Center.

The other sites, both owned by commercial companies, are open to spouses of any service. Transition Assistance Online also offers a monthly e-mail newsletter, called Jobs4Spouses, with job searching tips and resources. All of these services are free to military spouses. Military children can also use the gateway for job searches.

Transition Assistance Online and VetJobs.com are operated by veterans. Both are primarily geared for veterans looking for jobs, but have expanded to help spouses.

Stephen Tompkins, vice president for communications for VetJobs.com, said the organization decided to expand the job search capabilities to spouses because "the ability for spouses to have jobs

is critical to retention." "This is a global economy," Tompkins said. "We tell companies that spouses may move somewhere in the world where they have a branch."

Spouses can search the sites and post resumes free. Except for the Air Force site, companies pay a fee to be members, adding job postings to the gateway or collecting resumes of potential employees. On all the sites, spouses' resumes are available only to the listed companies and are protected by passwords.

The VetJobs.com spouse gateway, which opened to spouses in November, is still under construction but is expected to be finished in the spring. "We most definitely will seek out spouses," said Edie Widener, human resources administrator for Omniplex World Services, in McLean, VA. The company has had success in hiring veterans from VetJobs.com

The fact that spouses may relocate after two or three years is not an issue for the company, Widener said. "A lot of our work is contract, and the contracts may be three or five years," she said.



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