



Hiring Our Heroes and Blue Star Families Announce Blue Star Spouse Networks

Professionally-Specific Groups Will Offer Military Spouses Venues to Connect, Mentor and Advocate for Support of Their Unique Career Challenges

Educator, Health Care, and Entrepreneur Groups Now Open for Membership

Washington, D.C. (January 8, 2013)—Military spouses nation wide now have a new platform for their unique professional challenges with the Blue Star Spouse Networks, launched today by Hiring Our Heroes (HoH) and Blue Star Families (BSF), a national non-profit organization by and for military families. Hosted by HoH and BSF, the Networks will serve as incubators for organic growth, empowering members to address their own needs and those of others in their profession. Kicking off with Educators, Health Care Professionals and Entrepreneurs, the Blue Star Spouse Networks will encourage military spouses to work in conjunction with the private sector, the Department of Defense, and state and regional stakeholders to shape the future of professional military spouses.

“In our 2012 Military Families Lifestyle Survey, twenty-seven percent of all spouse respondents said that they have faced difficulties with transferring their professional certificates or licenses across state lines,” said Vivian Greentree, Ph.D., director of research and policy for Blue Star Families. “Interstate licensing requirements are a huge obstacle for military spouses, and the Blue Star Spouse Networks will provide a much-needed forum for spouses to work toward the changes needed in their professions. By working with the private sector, local and state government and federal agencies, military spouses will finally have an avenue for working together to address our unique professional challenges.”

The Blue Star Spouse Networks launch with two of the three most common professions for military spouses: education and health care. Plus, twenty-six percent of military spouse respondents to the 2012 Military Families Lifestyle Survey said they have operated their own business or currently are operating their own business.

“This is the perfect marriage of two organizations who are working every day on behalf of military spouses,” said Laura Dempsey, director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Program. “Hiring Our Heroes and Blue Star Families individually reach tens of thousands of military families and bringing us together to create Blue Star Spouse Networks has the ability to be a game-changer for the spouse community. We think military spouses who join these three networks will see the benefits to their personal and professional lives almost immediately.”

Through the Facebook groups, members of the Blue Star Spouse Networks can connect with others in their profession to share concerns, advice and support. Additionally, HoH and BSF will regularly host Google Hangouts for each Network on a variety of pertinent topics selected by the Network members. All three Networks are now open for membership. Members are encouraged to invite their friends and colleagues to join, as well.

###

About Blue Star Families

Blue Star Families is a national, nonprofit network of military families from all ranks and services, including guard and reserve, with a mission to support, connect and empower military families. In addition to morale and empowerment programs, Blue Star Families raises awareness of the challenges and strengths of military family life and works to make military life more sustainable. Membership includes military spouses, children and parents as well as service members, veterans and civilians.

To learn more about Blue Star Families, visit <http://www.bluestarfam.org>.

About Hiring Our Heroes

In March of 2011, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's National Chamber Foundation launched Hiring Our Heroes, a nationwide initiative to help veterans and military spouses find meaningful employment. Working with our network of 1600 state and local chambers and other strategic partners from the public, private, and non-profit sectors, our goal is to create a movement across America in hundreds of local communities where veterans and military families return every day.

Hiring Our Heroes has hosted more than 385 hiring fairs in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia; more than 14,100 have gotten jobs. To learn more about Hiring Our Heroes, visit <http://www.uschamber.com/hiringourheroes>

Media Contact for Blue Star Families

Stephanie Himel-Nelson
Stephanie@BlueStarFam.org
703-472-6292

AnnaMaria White
AMWhite@BlueStarFam.org
619-500-3616
[@white_am](#)

Media Contact for Hiring Our Heroes

Bryan Goettel
202-463-5961
BGoettel@USChamber.com