

Army Family Covenant Update

ERP successfully matches spouses to jobs

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The Army Family Covenant states, "We are committed to improving family readiness by expanding education and employment opportunities for family members."

A big part of how that is accomplished is through the Employment Readiness Program provided by Army Community Service.

"The Fort Jackson Employment Readiness Office's primary function is to help military spouses and children reach their employment, education and volunteer goals," said Barbara Martin, ERP manager. "We offer a wide range of services to include resume development, local job market research, job search assistance, home business opportunities, on-and-off job listings, career counseling, Internet access to conduct job searches, scholarship information, teen employment assistance and a variety of workshops or individual training sessions.

"Individuals can also visit the employment readiness resources area to take advantage of free computer training, fax resumes, conduct online job searches or complete self-paced online training courses to improve their interviewing techniques or improve typing skills," she said.

Every month, the ERP offers an employment readiness orientation to help job seekers get a jump-start by obtaining job resources and job-searching techniques.

After the orientation class, an ERP staff member meets with each person in attendance to help plan his or her short- and long-term employment and education goals.

"Our goal is to help spouses find a job here, but also help them with their long range goals as well," Martin said. "We also help each individual explore career options by completing a career assessment tool and helping (him or her) create a resume."

In addition, each person will receive daily e-mails from the ERP staff informing them of job openings, job fairs and employment resources. Spouses have indicated

that they have been able to land a job faster by having direct access to job postings via e-mail. E-mail puts job seekers in direct contact with the hiring official, which provides an advantage compared to applying for a job posted on an employer's Web site.

"The Employee Readiness Program is an excellent source for military spouses," said Arnetta McMahan, an ACS client. "Moving every three to four years gives us the opportunity to seek new employment and gain new experience. This can be a welcoming change, however, it can be very challenging. We have to make sure that we stay abreast of new computer skills; the latest resume formats and the job market for the area.

"The Employee Readiness Program offers various resources that are helpful in your job search: Orientation to introduce the program and what's offered; resume writing, computer classes; Web site for job search; posting of job openings and they even forward e-mails to your personal e-mail account on job information," McMahan said. "I utilized the program quite extensively and found it to be very helpful."

When Catherine Judy, American Red Cross, started her job search at Fort Jackson, she could not understand why she was having so much trouble getting an interview and turned to ERP for help.

"I had submitted several resumes to companies and was not getting any interviews. I had worked in several administrative jobs in the past and could not understand why no one was calling me," she said.

While attending the employment readiness workshop, "Resume Writing for Beginners," she realized she needed a resume for private-sector jobs as well as one for federal employment.

"Mrs. Martin assisted me with developing target resumes for each position that I applied for," Judy said. "While I was submitting resumes, I decided to begin taking the ACS self-paced computer classes. I had knowledge of computers, but I wanted to have something official on my resume to document that I had official

computer training. I also attended the workshop, 'Successful Interviewing.' This class helped me to prepare for my interview and increased my self-confidence."

Later this month, the ERP will feature a workshop for spouses who want to work but cannot because of child care and transportation issues or lack of job skills.

The workshop will focus on resources available to help spouses overcome these obstacles. Free child care will be available for children of junior enlisted Soldiers.

The workshop, "Overcoming Employment Obstacles," will be held from 9 a.m. to noon, May 21 at the Education Center. Individuals needing child care must contact the Employment Readiness Office today.

Another Fort Jackson ERP initiative is to offer free training for military spouses to receive a "Career Readiness Certificate" in June. This credential will increase spouses' employment opportunities and give them the upper hand in the competitive job market.

In June, the focus is on jobs that spouses can take with them wherever they go. The workshop "Careers on the Go" will be held from 9 a.m. to noon, June 25 at the Main Post Chapel. It will highlight successful entrepreneurs. There will be door prizes and free food. In addition, a small-business class will be offered in June.

In September, scholarships for military spouses will be offered to take tax training. This training will enable spouses to gain the skills necessary to work at tax agencies stateside or overseas.

"Moving is stressful enough, so when you add on moving to a new state or country and looking for a new job the stress level is even higher," McMahan said. "The staff at the Employment Readiness Center offers professional service, a listening ear and encouraging words to aid you in your job search. I recommend using the program for all it has to offer. It made a difference for me and I'm sure it will for others."

For more information about the Fort Jackson ERP, call 751-5256 or visit http://www.fortjacksonmwr.com/lacs_emp/index.html.



Today

Southern Style Lunch Buffet, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Officers' Club. The buffet is open to everyone.

Visit **Century Lanes** for food, fun and bowling.

Magruders Pub is open for lunch.

Participate in the **FRG Forum**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Joe E. Mann Center.

Friday

Play **Victory Bingo** and win prizes up to \$15,000. There are guaranteed \$50 payouts.

Artistic Expression with Jake begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Youth Center Teen Room.

Dance to a variety of music provided by DJ Randall at **Magruders Club** from

9 p.m. to 3 a.m. The club is located in the back of Magruders Pub and the cover charge is \$3 for military and \$5 for civilians.

Come out for **'80s Flashback** at Magruders Club.

SKIES students perform a spring recital, 5-6 p.m. at the Main Post Chapel sanctuary.

Saturday

Step Team practice begins at 2 p.m. at the Youth Center Dance Room.

The NCO Club presents **Classic Soul Saturday** from 9:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. in the Excalibur Room. The cover charge is \$3 for military and \$5 for civilians. Live broadcasts from the BIG DM 101.3 with giveaways will be held 9:30-11 p.m.

Sunday

Come to **brunch** from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Officers' Club.

Family Day at the Youth Center will

be 2-6 p.m.

Monday

The NCO Club presents a **full lunch buffet**, featuring fried chicken or fish, fresh vegetables, a full salad bar, soup, assorted desserts and a beverage from 11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. for \$7.

Tuesday

Movie Night begins at 6 p.m. at the Youth Center in the Teen Room.

Enjoy **free movies** every Tuesday at Magruders Pub.

Wednesday

Be a sensation with **Karaoke with Tom Marable** at **Magruders Club** at 7:30 p.m. Cover charge is \$3 for military and \$5 for civilians.

Mark your Calendars

Army Birthday Celebration at Patriots' Park will be June 14.

Ongoing Offers

- The **NCO Club lunch buffet** is served from 11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., daily. The cost is \$7 for adults and \$3.75 for children.

- The **NCO Club breakfast** is served 6-9 a.m., Monday through Friday. The cost for adults is \$7 and \$3.75 for children 4-10 years old.

- The **Officers' Club specializes in catering** wedding receptions, anniversaries, promotions and other special occasions.

- The **NCO Club caters** to all your needs: dining in, dining out, promotions, breakfasts, meetings, birthdays, weddings, graduation, retirements and other special occasions.

- **Victory Travel** has special offers for a variety of dinner shows and attractions. Some require reservations. Stop by Victory Travel in the MG Robert B. Solomon Center for more information on available discounts.