

Beginning the transition process...

By **BRYAN THARPE**
ACAP TSM

So, you just looked at your countdown calendar, and in about a year, you're going to be parting company with the Army. "Wow," you think, "that time will pass fast!" You're suddenly overcome with a gnawing feeling that you ought to be doing something to get ready for this major change in your life.

Then you remember one of your friends talking about how valuable ACAP services had been when she completed her military service, so you grab the phone and call ACAP.

The voice on the other end of the line is friendly and gives you the answer you want to hear. The ACAP staff member explains that transitioning Soldiers normally begin working with the Center 18 months to one year from ETS or two years from retirement.

"Hey," you think, "that's still a long way out to get started." Your first impulse is to voice that fact in no uncertain terms to the person on the other end of the line.

Fortunately, some of your human relations training kicks in, and you simply say, "Well, I guess by starting earlier I can better prepare myself for the transition."

If you see yourself in this scenario, read on – indeed, it may be too far out to start sending out resumes, but there are some things you can do while you're waiting for that separation or retirement date to draw closer.

Furthermore, the earlier you start using ACAP services, the more latitude you have to schedule appointments around your unit mission requirement.

■ **Start networking.** You can get started networking (talking) with relatives, friends, and acquaintances to let them know you'll be looking for a job in about a year.

You'll probably be pleasantly surprised at just how helpful network contacts can be. Most people you talk to will be more than willing to help.

Of course, the more specific you can be in terms of what you want to do and where you want to live, the

more valuable your network contacts can be. The value of networking in job search is illustrated by the fact that almost 80 percent of job seekers find their jobs through some form of networking.

■ **Attend an ACAP Job Assistance Workshop.** Knowing how and where to look for a job is half the battle.

You can never begin too soon to start learning all you can about the job search process, how to produce great resumes and cover letters, and acquiring excellent interviewing skills that make you look and sound polished while you are trying to market your abilities.

■ **Take advantage of all the services the Education Center offers.** Of course, the obvious thing here is to further your education and training to make you more marketable. You may wish to work on a degree or brush up on your computer skills (computer classes and skills are especially good for your resume). Either way, the Education Center can help you.

Additional training and education will usually increase your options for employment. And, if you aren't sure what you want to do when you finish your military service, the Education Center can help you complete an interest inventory that will indicate what types of occupations you appear to be best suited for.

■ **Gather information.** Once you start your job search, you'll need a great deal of information to accurately complete job applications and to develop an effective resume. You can start gathering that information now.

This will include such things as the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of previous supervisors and where you worked and the inclusive dates you worked there for at least the last 10 years.

Additionally, gathering other documents, such as personnel records, training certificates, diplomas, etc. will make it much easier to write an effective resume and to answer interview questions. If you wait until you're out of the military to start gathering this information, the task will be much more difficult.

■ **Research.** You can start researching companies, salaries, and cost of

living in particular areas of the country. Researching companies can help you decide if you really want to send a resume to a particular company and can help you shine when you go for an interview with the company.

Additionally, you can get started researching the salaries for the kinds of jobs you're interested in as well as the cost of living in areas where you might relocate. This research can pay big dividends for you. One major benefit is that it will help you decide if salaries in the industry and area you're considering are adequate. Of course, to make a good decision on salary, you'll need to know how the cost of living in one area compares with other areas. The information regarding salaries and cost of living will also be very valuable if you have the opportunity to negotiate salary.

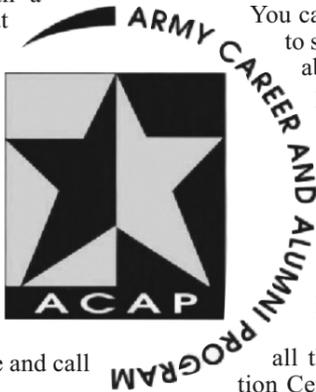
■ **Develop a positive "I won't procrastinate" attitude.** Perhaps the best thing you can do between now and the time you start working with ACAP is to develop a positive attitude that includes a determination not to procrastinate.

Get started on all the things mentioned above. Allow yourself to be positive about your worth in the marketplace – it's a fact that employers are looking for people like you who have a good work ethic, who are motivated, and who know how to work as a team member.

Resolve that the first day you're eligible to work with ACAP, you'll stop by the Center and sign up for ACAP services. Additionally, resolve that you'll take advantage of all the services ACAP offers with the knowledge that individuals who work with ACAP generally get jobs sooner and get higher starting salaries than soldiers who do not use the full range of services.

As you can see, there are a number of things you can do to be more proactive in your transition process while waiting for your separation or retirement date.

For more suggestions, contact the Ft Rucker ACAP Center at (334) 255-2546, or drop by the ACAP Center located in the Soldier Service Center, Bldg 5700, Room 185. Soldiers assigned to Camp Shelby and surrounding area may contact the Camp Shelby ACAP Counselor at (601) 558-2298. Additionally, you can register for ACAP services by going to <https://www.acap.army.mil>.



PERSONNEL PROFILE OFFICER

Hankins serves as logistics staff officer

By **DANA ELISE SMITH**
CSJFTC Public Affairs

Capt. John Hankins serves in the Mobilization Operations Center as a logistics staff officer. His job is to plan and direct activities of personnel and units that are responsible for the receipt, storage, and issue of all commodities of supply. In addition, he advises the commander on logistical matters and unit mission capabilities.

The Caledonia native has been serving in the military for 20 years.

"I always enjoyed the patriotic aspect of being in the military," said Hankins. "I enjoyed it as well as the camaraderie amongst Soldiers, the challenge that the military offers and being a part of a team."

Before receiving his commission, he served as a combat medic and information system analyst information technology specialist. He deployed in support of Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1991 with the 4th Battalion, 8th Infantry Division, head-

quartered in Bad Kreuznach, Germany. He deployed in support of Operation Enduring/Iraqi Freedom from 2002 to 2003 with Special Operations Detachment South, headquartered in Jackson.

He is currently a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, headquartered in Jackson.

Hankins earned a master's degree in Science Logistics Trade and Transportation with certification in economic develop-

ment from the University of Southern Mississippi in May. He previously earned his bachelor's degree in 2009 from Excelsior College, based in Albany, N.Y., and an associate degree in 1997 from Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville.

He enjoys spending time with his family which includes his wife, Emily, and two sons, Drew, 18, and Dylan, 13. He likes to spend his spare time watching sports, listening to music, doing yard work and tinkering with old cars.



Hankins

AARTS transition

The Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS) is in the process of transitioning to the Joint Services Transcript (JST). The JST will produce a FREE uniformed transcript of all military training and experiences to Service members from all branches. The new electronic transcripts will include Enlisted, Warrant Offi-

cer and Officer training, joint military training, and DANTES-funded standardized test scores. The transition to JST was expected to be completed by Jan. 1. During the transition, the process of requesting an AARTS transcript via GoArmyEd or the AARTS website will not change. For more info, contact John.f.junk-ins.naf@mail.mil, 601-558-2029.

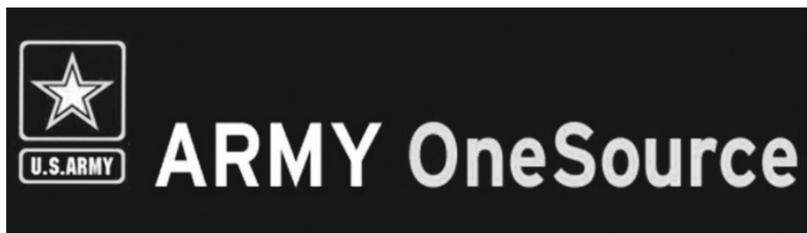
AOS supports Soldiers and Families

By **RICHARD PATTON**

AOS Community Support Coordinator

Army OneSource (AOS) is a Secretary of the Army initiative designed to ensure Soldiers and their Families have access to standardized support programs and services regardless of component or geographic location. AOS utilizes a multi-pronged approach which includes traditional establishments on installations, a Web-based information portal and partnerships with community service providers to connect Service members, living on or near an installation and the geographically dispersed, with the services and support they need most.

The community outreach element of the AOS Initiative is implemented by AOS Community Support Coordinators (CSCs). CSCs develop partnerships with community organizations to provide an extension to the services traditionally offered by installation-based programs. The efforts are focused on four primary areas – behavioral health, financial, legal and faith – which have proven to be the areas of greatest need. AOS is partnered with national organizations such as the American Bar Association, Mil-



itary Saves, Army Community Covenant, Better Business Bureau, Veteran Affairs, Military OneSource and the Chief of Chaplains.

Within the area of behavioral health, AOS is educating primary care physicians, caseworkers, mental health providers, and other professionals – who may see a Veteran or Family member on an unrelated issue – on military culture and best practices for identifying, assessing, and treating behavioral health issues resulting from the trauma of war.

AOS is enlisting financial institutions and associations to connect Service Members and their Families with educational programs and financial assistance and engaging law firms, law schools and professional legal associations to provide legal services and/or pro bono legal assistance. AOS is also

connecting interested legal professionals and groups to existing programs that have partnered with the Armed Forces and providing opportunities for continuing legal education on Military law. Finally, AOS is connecting national faith-based organizations, clergy, and local churches to provide services and support to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of Soldiers and their Families.

An estimated 19,500 Iraq-Afghanistan veterans are reintegrating into Mississippi communities and approximately 96 percent have expressed interest in services to help with readjustment to civilian life. For more information on how your organization can get involved, contact your Mississippi Community Support Coordinator by visiting www.myarmyonesource.com/communitysupport



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