

Christie Administration Partners With Prudential Financial, Inc. to Expand Employment Opportunities for New Jersey's Veterans

Tuesday, April 3, 2012 Tags: [Jobs and the Economy](#)

Trenton, NJ – Building on the Christie Administration's commitment to support New Jersey's veterans, Acting Governor Kim Guadagno today joined Administration officials and businesses leaders to launch the *Operation Hire a Jersey Hero* Symposium at Prudential's headquarters in Newark, an event focused on promoting job opportunities for veterans by connecting employers with state resources available to support the hiring of veterans. The Christie Administration created the symposium series after hearing from Garden State employers who sought information on how to recruit veterans and how military skills can be translated into civilian employment.

"Our Administration is committed to working with the business community to give our state's veterans an opportunity to leverage the skills they garnered during military service to find employment," said Acting Governor Guadagno. "Today's event is another example of how the public and private sectors can come together to assist our nation's heroes. New Jersey offers a broad array of programs and services to support our veterans and help them secure employment, including tools and resources for employers to more easily connect with our state's veterans and incentivize hiring. Working with Prudential, already a leader in veteran hiring, this symposium will help strengthen these efforts throughout the state."

During the symposium, speakers highlighted the many resources available to aid those seeking to employ a veteran. Working through various state departments and outside partners, employers are offered services including registered apprenticeship programs, funds for on-the-job training, tax credits, customized and literacy training grants, and veteran referral resources.

Panelists at the symposium included staff from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA), the federal Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), and Prudential. An estimated 100 employers actively interested in hiring New Jersey veterans participated.

"At a time of high unemployment, transitioning veterans into post-service careers is an urgent priority. At Prudential, we view recruiting veterans as an integral part of our broader talent management strategy," said Prudential Chairman and Chief Executive Officer John Strangfeld. "As more companies look at the opportunity of hiring veterans as part of their strategy, the more they will invest in and create sustainable paths for veterans to meaningful careers."

Prudential has had a longstanding commitment to veterans and active service members, providing access to quality education, job training, and employment opportunities. Prudential collaborates with other Fortune 500 companies to share best practices and promote adoption of successful education and training models, such as VETalent, a partnership with Workforce Opportunities Services, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, and a local university, which prepares veterans for new careers through a work-study program leading to a certification.

In attending today's symposium, LWD Commissioner Harold J. Wirths noted, "I'm proud to stand with other colleagues in the Administration and the private sector to make this important initiative a success. I strongly believe that we must support our veterans who have sacrificed so willingly for us and for our country. I am ecstatic about the number of businesses who came here today to find out about the resources we have available to help them put our veterans into meaningful careers."

"This event is a critical part of a broader strategy to make employers aware that hiring veterans is more than just the right thing to do," said Brigadier General Michael L. Cunniff, the Adjutant General. "Hiring veterans also makes good business sense. Veterans are dedicated workers who thrive under pressure, understand teamwork and don't quit until the job is done."

As of 2011, New Jersey was home to 430,000 veterans, age 20 and older, according to the latest Current Population Survey (CPS) report, which is compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Of those veterans, 209,000 were counted as being in the state labor force and 186,000 of them were listed as employed. The state's unemployment rate for non-veterans during 2011 was 8.9 percent, compared to 10.7 percent for veterans, according to the CPS.

The Christie Administration has maintained a commitment to support New Jersey's veterans. In his Fiscal Year 2013 Budget, Governor Christie is expanding the highly effective Veterans Haven program to serve veterans in the northern

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part of the state at the site of Hagedorn Psychiatric Hospital. Governor Christie has also signed various pieces of legislation to assist veterans, including bills to strengthen the support network for military families after the death of a service member; establish a program that awards high school diplomas to veterans who dropped out to serve in World War II, Korea and Vietnam; honor Gold Star Families with a special license plate for families of members of the military killed in action for their sacrifice; establish the New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council Fund; ensure funding for the Veteran to Veteran Peer Support Program telephone helpline; and reinvigorate programs like Helmets2Hardhats to put veterans back to work

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