

## **ARNG Job Connection Education Program (JCEP)**

**What is JCEP?** JCEP is an Army National Guard (ARNG) employment initiative designed to help improve the quality of life of National Guard Soldiers who are unemployed or under-employed. This is done by improving their ability to seek, obtain, and retain civilian employment through assessing their skills and experiences that lead to updated resumes, effective interview training, job search training, and education and job expositions. The JCEP goal is to connect Soldiers to civilian employment opportunities. JCEP staff work individually with Soldiers and closely with local employers to establish formal relationships that match skills and requirements with potential employers. Classroom activities and practical exercises result in improved Soldier self-confidence, more job interviews, and improved employment rates. Currently, JCEP is operating as a pilot test program out of the Sandage Armory in Fort Worth, Texas.

**What has the Army Guard done?** In the past ARNG has focused on education benefits but due to multiple deployments and a slow economy, the unemployment rate among ARNG Soldiers has risen to 11.29%. Meanwhile the U.S. rate is still at 9.7%, according to Civilian Employment Information and the Department of Labor May 2010 unemployment report. The ARNG Employment Branch has developed several initiatives/programs besides JCEP to assist Soldiers in connecting with employers. One initiative is the Employer Partnership Office (EPO). The ARNG began partnering with the U.S. Army Reserve in June 2009 and brought the program to ARNG Soldiers in October 2009. EPO assist Soldiers through its website and Program Support Managers (PSMs) to conduct job searches by Military Occupation Skill, civilian job title, or region. Soldiers can apply and submit resumes from this site directly to one of over 900 EPO business partners and Fortune 500 companies.

**What continued efforts does the Army Guard have planned for the future?** The ARNG will continue to focus on readiness and ways to create quality employment skills training and opportunities for Soldiers by assisting Soldiers to capitalize on previous experiences and training. Build relationships and processes that foster employer readiness when ARNG Soldiers are mobilized. Develop a JCEP in 54 states/territories.

**Why is this important to the Army and the Army Guard?** JCEP is essential to the sustainability and retention of the ARNG. Soldiers are having problems marketing themselves and finding employment. JCEP provides the confidence an opportunity for Soldiers to attain job skill training and gain civilian employment while serving in the ARNG.