

2014 Job Fairs / Hiring Events

- January 23 Still Serving Veterans - Opelika 9a-2p
- January 27 AllJobNetwork – Birmingham 5p-8p
- ~~January 30 Hiring Our Heroes – Montgomery 10a-1p – TO BE RESCHEDULED~~
- February 4 Faulkner University Career Fair 2014 –Montgomery 10a-2p
- February 5 Alabama Career Center – Alabama Dept of Corrections
3928 Highway 431, Roanoke, Alabama 36274 8:30a-1:30p
- February 6 Lowe's Will Be Hiring for Nine Stores 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Jefferson State Community College, Lurleen Wallace Hall, Room 300 (2601 Carson Road, Birmingham, Alabama)
- February 11 Ft Deposit Military Job Fair @ Ft Deposit Elementary 9a-2p
- February 19 – 21 -WARRIORS TO THE WORKFORCE HIRING EVENT – 8a-4p
@ Von Braun Center - East Hall #3, 700 Monroe Street, Huntsville, Alabama Phone: (256) 533-1953
- February 25-26 Publix Job Fair 10a-6p @ Mobile Marriott 3101 Airport Blvd., Mobile, AL
- March 19 Goodwill Industries Career Center – Auburn, AL 9a-2p
- March 20 Georgia DOL Military Job Fair – Ft Benning, GA
- March 21-23 APAC – Montgomery
- March 27 National Hire A Vet Day – Virtual Career Fair – 1a-4p www.veteransrecruiting.com
- April 1 Baldwin County Job Fair- Daphne
- April 23-25 Boss Lift – Ft Benning, GA
- April 27 Panther Racing – Barber Motor Sports Park
- April 29 Veterans' Career Fair & Diversity Job Expo – Birmingham 10a-2p
- May 1 15th Annual Business Expo/Jobs Fair - 9a-2p - Mobile Civic Center Expo Hall
- May 5 League of Municipalities – Mobile, AL
- May 7 Hiring Our Heroes –Birmingham
- May 9 Veterans Supermarket – Opelika, AL
- May 16-17 Blue Star/Gold Star Survivor Outreach
- June 4 Military's Edge Job Fair –Huntsville 10a-2p
- June 25 Alabama CareerCenter Veterans Unit - Armed Forces Reserve Center, Broad Street, Mobile
- July 8 Hiring Our Heroes –Huntsville
- July 30 Fort Rucker 9a-1p
- October 14 Community Job Fair – Dothan, AL
- October 23 Career Fair & Diversity Job Expo – Birmingham 10a-2p
- October 28 Fort Rucker – ACAP Job Fair
- December 11 Fort Rucker - ACAP Job Fair

** If you hear of any hiring event in your area, please let me know at your earliest convenience and I will make every effort to attend. Email Information to: Wendy.Wilson@iifdata.com

BY JEANNE KOUHESTANI, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

GETTING ON WITH THE JOB

ATS Helps Turn the Tide of Unemployment With DoD's Hero2Hired Program

About a thousand members of the National Guard and Reserves and their families across the nation are being hired each month through Hero2Hired (H2H), an employment initiative of the Department of Defense's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP). Since the launch of H2H in late 2011, unemployment figures for the Guard and Reserve have dropped from 13 percent to 11 percent. The H2H program received a Secretary of Defense Award for Excellence in February 2013.

The first phase of H2H was the introduction of a Web portal that lists jobs from participating employers nationwide and facilitates the application process. When THE OFFICER interviewed Ron Young, executive director of YRRP and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), and Rusty Rice, H2H program manager for A-Team Solutions (ATS), about the program last year, ATS had recently been contracted to administer Phase Two, the field portion of the program. ATS has since hired and managed the network of employment transition coordinators (ETCs), who brief units and employers about the program and work directly with job seekers on their résumés, interviewing techniques, military-to-civilian skills translation, job research, and connection with potential employers.

The ETCs have conducted about 35,000 unit briefings and other outreach activities, including local job fairs. They also support the H2H Mobile Job Store, which visits nearly every state in the contiguous United States. There, job seekers can learn how to best use the Web portal to search for jobs and get help from an ETC or ESGR volunteer working with the Mobile Job Store.

"Adding this face-to-face interaction to the H2H program was necessary to produce the high quality of service our warfighters deserve," Mr. Young said. He noted that the biggest success of the program in the past year was the fielding of 56 ETCs located throughout the states, territories, and the District of Columbia.

The statistics help tell the story.



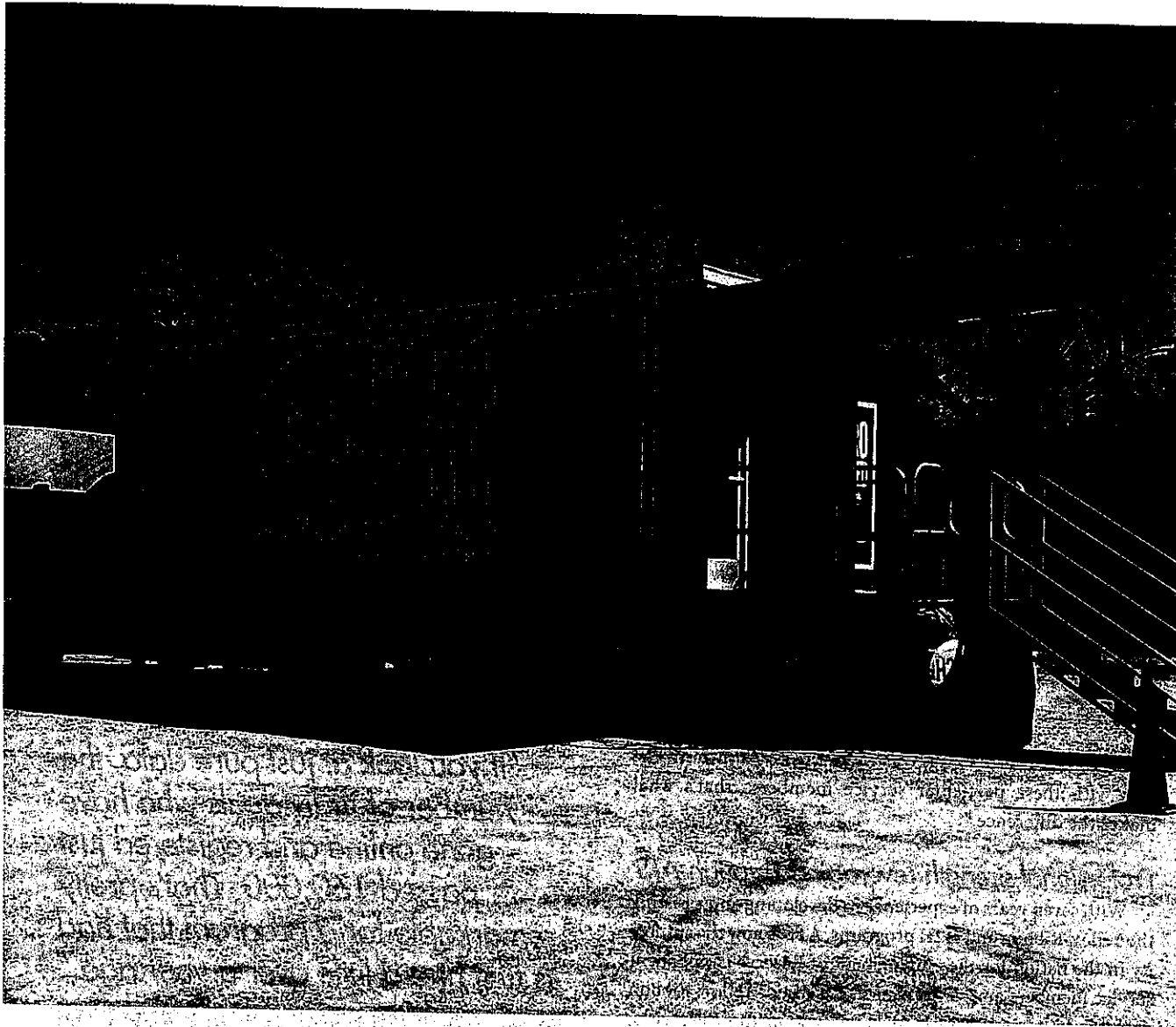
A-Team Solutions, LLC (ATS) is an award-winning, privately held, SBA 8(a) certified and verified service disabled veteran-owned (SDVO) business. Founded in 2004, ATS provides professional solutions in the areas of mission-oriented business integrated services (MOBIS), information technology (IT), and staffing.

With the return of troops from Afghanistan on the horizon, the employment transition coordinators have pulled out all the stops to get ready for the influx.

"If you look at just pure data, the number of individuals who have gone online and registered just passed 160,000," Mr. Rice said. "That's pretty remarkable for a program that had its first hire a little over a year ago."

More than 20,000 employers are registered on *H2H.jobs*, and 3.7 million open jobs are currently listed on the website.

The program has not been without challenges. According to service member feedback, translating military accomplishments and skill sets into civilian terminology in a résumé and during interviews so employers will know how to use them has been a tough bridge to cross. Employers in the program already understand the value of discipline, loyalty, and leadership embodied in the military ethos, but they may



The Mobile Job Store visits Guard, Reserve, and U.S. Coast Guard installations throughout the continental United States, helping unemployed service members connect to military-friendly employers through the *H2H.jobs* website and to employment transition coordinators.

be hard pressed to know how particular skills may support the company's mission. Educating both employers and service members will greatly improve the odds of a good match, Mr. Young said.

Phase Three Begins

H2H has now begun its next growth spurt. Its latest high-tech advance is the case management system. Designed to support the job seeker, the system allows ETCs to input, manage, track, and transfer data that is specific to each individual. Cases can be easily transferred to other ETCs, if necessary, with little or no gap in services.

H2H has provided 500 additional case management system software licenses to use in the field as force multipliers under the coordination of the ETCs. The licenses are going

to qualified and certified volunteers, who may be selected via any of the military branches, local or state government, or ESGR sources. "These force multipliers are significant," Mr. Rice said. "I expect the number of new hires to increase dramatically."

With the return of troops from Afghanistan on the horizon, the ETCs have pulled out all the stops to get ready for the influx. They are working with the National Guard, Air Guard, and Reserve Components to determine the unemployment numbers and skill sets of returning warfighters.

"What we have found most successful is if we can get to the troops before they return and put their résumés online, we can target the geographic area they are returning to and set up a hiring fair with the employers who want to hire them," Mr. Rice said. "We can do this fairly quickly, because

A Personal H2H Experience

Hospital Corpsman Petty Officer First Class Pablo A. Rivera, Operational Health Support Unit, San Diego, U.S. Navy Reserve, wrote the following letter to ETC Felix Giovinazzi in early December:

I just wanted you to know that thanks to the H2H jobs brief you gave me at NMPS this September, I was able to find a job within a month. At first I was skeptical about this DoD website, but after I logged in and played around with the site a little bit, I found TONS of EXCELLENT job opportunities. I went from being an HMH in the U.S. Navy

to the newest production supervisor at a large multinational, upscale food industry corporation. I am very grateful for this new career, as the company is providing excellent training to set me up for success and lots of opportunities for growth. The company was looking for a motivated and recently separated E-6 or above with a strong drive and leadership skills, and they found one!

This H2H jobs website is in the top five list of the best things the military ever gave me—right up there with the peacoat, LASIK, the GI Bill, and a bachelor's degree.

the employers are very aggressive and they want to fill the jobs with these particular service members. That's what makes the difference."

Professional-strength Leveraging Through ATS

With seven years of experience in developing and assisting the Yellow Ribbon and H2H programs, ATS is now the authority in the nation for the employment of Reserve Component service members and veterans, Mr. Rice said. Yellow Ribbon operates in a similar vein to H2H, supporting Reservists, National Guard members, and their families throughout the deployment process—a service especially important to those living in remote areas without easy access to a military base.

Hiring the most experienced professionals to manage its contracts has been key to the company's success in this niche market. Mr. Rice, for example, helped develop the Army Reserve's employment program while still in uniform, and he joined the team of ATS contractors when he retired from service.

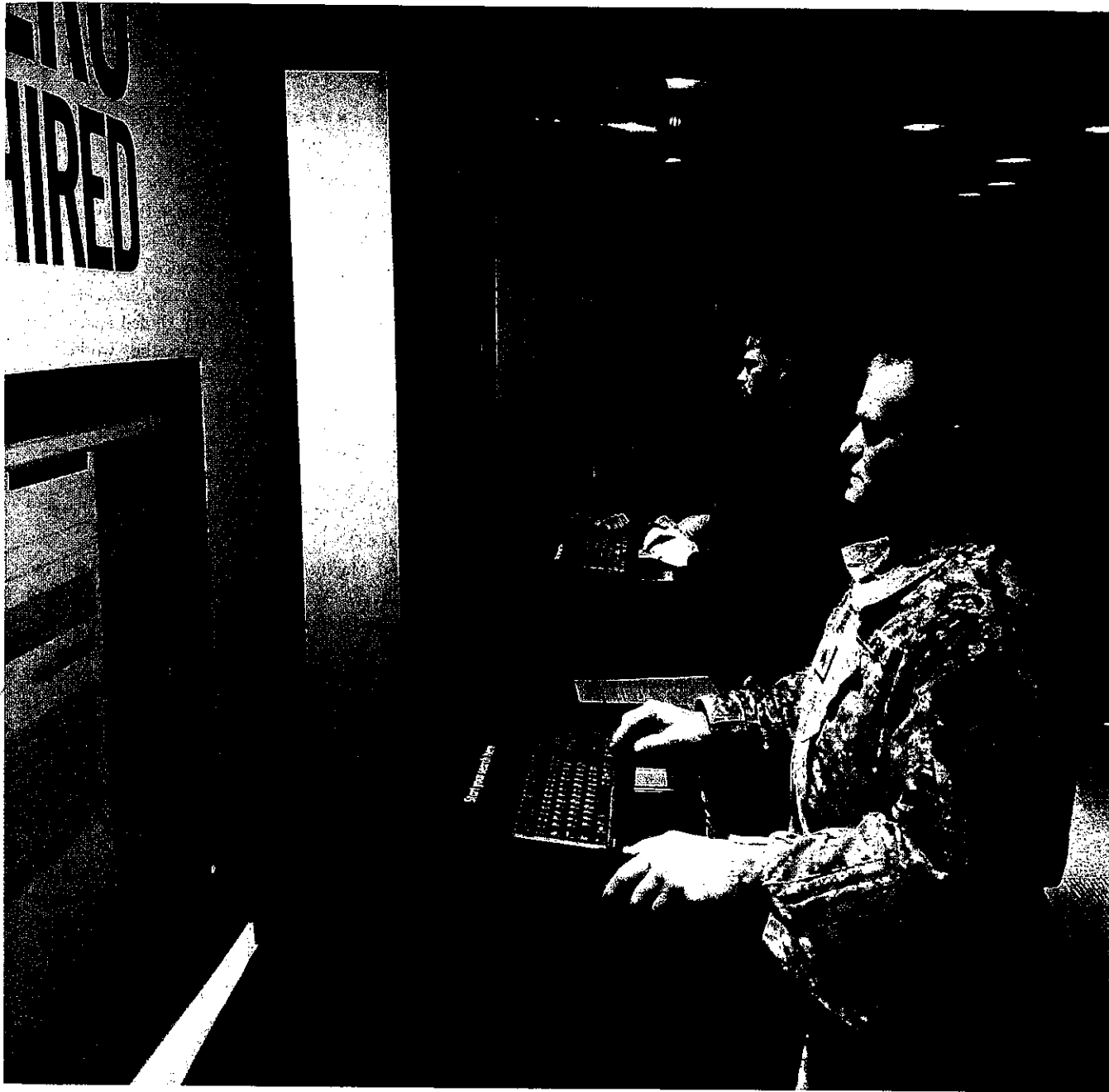
ATS brought in retired Navy officer Andrew Turnley—the Navy Reserve's first Yellow Ribbon program manager—to manage the Yellow Ribbon program contract. He currently oversees ATS' team of contract managers as well.

A small service disabled veteran-owned business, ATS was started by Glenn Kodani and J.J. Nathan in 2004 and now has defense contracts in every state in such diverse areas as information technology, warehouse operations, human resources, medical program management, and medical transcription services.

"If you look at just pure data, the number of individuals who have gone online and registered just passed 160,000. That's pretty remarkable for a program that had its first hire a little over a year ago."

The company's business model keeps its overhead low, and those savings are reflected in its contracts. Except for a small administrative staff in a Washington, D.C.-area office, employees are hired to work on specific contracts and either work from home or are embedded in the clients' offices. ATS has rental agreements in place nationwide for temporary facilities when office space is needed for meetings or conferences.

The distribution of employees and contract managers across the country has several advantages. It gives ATS the ability to respond quickly to short-turnaround proposals. If a request for proposal comes out of Washington, D.C., for example, the D.C. team can jump-start it and push it to a manager in the Midwest to work on, who will then shoot it out to the proposal-writing team on the West Coast, which will then send it back to the originating manager in D.C. by the next



More than 100 service members stopped by the Mobile Job Store during its stop in Colorado to learn about Hero2Hired and peruse the *H2H.jobs* portal to see what jobs were available in their area and elsewhere in the nation.

morning. A similar process goes into play when bad weather shuts an area down.

ATS' small and dynamic team capitalizes on everyone's strengths, previous experience, and connections. The company maintains a broad network of people with a variety of experience and unique skill sets who can be called upon to work on contracts or provide referrals.

Because of its status as a service disabled veteran-owned business, ATS can be awarded federal contracts through a direct set-aside. Each federal agency has a requirement to give

a small percentage of its contracts to businesses such as ATS or minority- or women-owned businesses. If a company in one of these categories has performed well for the agency in the past, giving the company additional business through a set-aside helps the government reach its goal.

It gets even better when a number of small companies in a particular category like ATS have the capability to perform a contract, Mr. Turnley said. Then the government can make the set-aside competitive and not only meet its goal, but also ensure that it's getting the best value for the contract. ▀