

Building Recruiter-College Partnerships

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A. Understand One Another's Needs:

- **Recruiters:** Understand that colleges need to recruit, enroll, retain and graduate students. Build your partnerships by helping colleges do this for students who are, or will be, veterans.

- **Colleges:** Understand that recruiters need to develop leads among young people who are eligible for military service. They need to communicate with students who postpone college, who begin college but are not ready for the college experience and stop out, and with graduates who need money to repay student loans. Build your partnership by helping recruiters place literature racks in the best places, arrange table set-ups, and participate in open houses and job fairs. Consider recruiters as extensions of your own recruiting force.

B. Recruiters, You Start with Two Advantages:

(1) Over 1,880 colleges participate in ConAP. These colleges are already your partners. They expect to work with Army recruiters, expect to receive ConAP forms, and expect to enroll more veterans.

(2) Colleges believe in and practice Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM). SEM is a college/university-wide effort to recruit, enroll, retain and graduate the optimal number and kinds of students the institution desires to serve. It is important for recruiters to understand SEM because many recruiting programs fit under the SEM umbrella. These include the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB), Army College Fund, Loan Repayment, Tuition Assistance, March 2 Success, ConAP and more. Whenever you are speaking to college representatives, emphasize how Army recruiting programs can help colleges recruit, enroll, retain and graduate students.

C. Colleges, You Start with Four Advantages:

(1) The most important reasons soldiers enlist in the Army and Army Reserve are to obtain money for college and skill training. It is their dominant buying motive. You already have a captive audience.

(2) Army recruiting is a SEM opportunity for colleges to reach into a military market consisting of new soldiers enlisting for active and reserve service, soldiers serving in Army Reserve units, and returning Army veterans. Army recruiters can help you penetrate this market.

(3) ConAP links you to Army recruiters. Recruiters already push enlistees toward college by using education incentives and ConAP.

(4) Higher education is a dominant theme in our society. Recruiters know this—their most important incentives stress higher education. Recruiters need to know about your college so they can:

-- Sit at a kitchen table and discuss your academic programs and costs with parents and applicants.

-- Communicate with students who stop out of college because they lack money, maturity, have poor grades, etc.; they are just not ready for the college experience.

-- Communicate with graduates who need to repay student loans, want skill training or need a job.

D. Colleges: How to be a Valuable Partner? - Simple, just invite your recruiters to campus.

Reaching out to Army recruiters is the best way to make ConAP successful for your college. The better recruiters understand your academic programs, costs, and admission's process, the more likely they will be to recommend your college to their enlistees. The cost issue is especially important for

private colleges. One of the most effective steps you can take is to invite recruiters for an orientation on campus once a year. Ideas for an agenda follow. These are your tools.

- Review your academic programs. Remember, understanding a college is to understand its academic programs. Fill-out the CMF/MOS/College Program chart for recruiters.
- Discuss costs and how students can afford to attend by using MGIB benefits, Tuition Assistance, financial aid, work-study programs, loans, etc.
- Discuss admission requirements and the college application process
- Review ConAP procedures and the ConAP form. Implement a system to quickly return forms to recruiters. Discuss how to use your ConAP soldiers' Army Knowledge OnLine (AKO) military e-mail address to stay in touch and bond soldiers to the college.
- Encourage recruiters and spouses to take classes at the college
- Brainstorm best places on campus for recruiter literature. For example, where students go to drop classes, where students with federally insured loans go for their "exit interview", job placement center, where remedial classes are taught, where students get information about the college, other placers you can think of.
- Invite recruiters to speak to college classes or groups about their training and skills, careers, Army Values, education, other. Volunteer to speak to recruiters at their training classes.
- Bottom Line: Think of recruiters as extensions of your college recruiting force. Recruiters visit your feeder high schools and talk with counselors and students. They stress higher education and money for college; they touch a lot of people in the community.

E. Recruiters - How to be a Valuable Partner? - Nine Suggestions Here are nine easy-to-do actions you can take to help colleges recruit, enroll, retain and graduate students, and provide you with more quality leads. These are your tools.

(1) Use ConAP Send ConAP forms to local colleges for all your Active Duty and Reserve enlistees. Use additional ConAP forms if enlistees want to attend a distant college.

Advantages of ConAP:

- Reinforces dominant buying motive of money for college
- Positive effect on parents
- ConAP soldiers are 10% less likely to drop out of the DEP
- Recruiters build partnerships with local colleges

(2) Army Education Programs Explain education benefits for Active Duty and Reserve Soldiers (MGIB, Army College Fund, Army Loan Repayment, Tuition Assistance (TA), etc.)

(3) USAR Job Vacancy Report This monthly report shows job vacancies in local Army Reserve units. Recruiters can e-mail or take the report to high school and college counselors monthly. Details:

- Updated monthly, posted on the USAREC Intranet for recruiters at <http://hq.usarec.army.mil/ro/analysis/USAR/Jobvac/default.asp>. Download to a file and send as an email attachment or take to high school and college counselors.
- Report shows job vacancies in Army Reserve units. Explain that MOS codes ending in 1 are initial entry jobs; codes ending in 2 or 3 are for veterans.
- Counselors can show or give report to students, post on job bulletin boards, etc.

- For high school students and counselors, the report represents an opportunity for skill training, money for college and a part-time job. For college students it is a source of money to stay in college. For college counselors, it is a retention tool—a way students can afford college.
- When recruiters receive a call, they explain “the report is like a want ad in the newspaper—there is no guarantee a job is still available or an applicant will qualify. But, other jobs are available so lets meet, take the ASVAB test, etc.” From here, recruiters use their normal sales presentation.
- USAR service provides GI Bill education benefits, Tuition Assistance up to \$4,500 a year and, for some, an enlistment bonus or \$10,000/\$20,000 for loan repayment.

(4) CMF/MOS/College Program Chart (Career Management Field/Military Occupational Specialty). Enables recruiters to link enlistee MOS to specific degree programs at local ConAP colleges.

- Colleges and recruiters can download this report from the SOC web site at <http://www.soc.aascu.org/conap/>
- Recruiters send this chart to colleges by e-mail or deliver to the ConAP POC. Ask the POC to check off academic programs that match CMF and selected MOS.
- This chart has several uses:
 - a. Help recruiters match soldiers to colleges with academic programs similar to enlistee MOS.
 - b. Discussion topic with prospects, parents and counselors.

(5) Build Partnerships with Faculty For example, schedule a meeting with the Chairman, Criminal Justice Department. Explain that your station expects to enlist 12 soldiers a year as military policemen and, using ConAP, you will refer them to his college. Ask what advice he has for these future students that you can pass on. Then, give the Chairman your business cards and ask that, if any student is not ready for the academic experience and is going to stop out, have the student call you. The student may be able to enlist as a military policeman and take a long step toward a career in law enforcement. Some will return to college as veterans and complete their degree.

Recruiters, have enlistees fill out a ConAP form stating their intention to return as Criminal Justice students. By doing this, you are meeting the college’s need for students as well as your own need for leads. Try this for as many MOS and college programs as you like. It works—most faculty members respond in a positive manner.

(6) College Future Soldier Training Program Functions Explain that enlistees are in a Future Soldier Training Program (FSTP) until they leave for basic training, usually within 3-4 months, and that you have a FSTP function every month. One of these FSTP functions can be on a ConAP college campus on a Saturday morning. At the FSTP function, the college can brief its academic programs, costs, admissions process, how veterans are administered at the college, etc. Leave time to fill out ConAP forms and tour the campus. Army Reserve soldiers may visit a college on a drill weekend or a college official can brief at the Reserve Center. Two key points are: 1) Soldiers have earned education benefits and the Army sincerely wants them to use their benefits; 2) Encouraging Reserve Soldiers to use their education benefits is good for unit retention and boosts enrollment of veterans in college. DEP functions usually last about 2 hours and are arranged by recruiting stations. A two-station FSTP function could bring from 15 to 50 soldiers to campus. Bottom line: plan several College FSTP Functions a year.

(7) List of Veterans Army recruiters have a list of veterans living in the community that have completed their eight-year military obligation but are still eligible for further military service. It is the “Leads Listing Report”. The Staff Judge Advocate at the Army Recruiting Command has advised recruiters that it is permissible to contact individuals listed on the Leads Listing Report and inform them about Army opportunities. Further, this includes inviting them to open houses and other events co-sponsored by local colleges. This is done in cooperation with colleges and includes recruiter participation in the event. Army Reserve Retention NCOs have a list of veterans living in the

community who have not satisfied their eight-year military obligation. It is called Pro Leads. The first time lists were used this way was 1998 by the Toledo (Ohio) Recruiting Company and the University of Toledo. The result was a spike in enrollment of veterans, and enlistment in the Army Reserve. Ask Army Reserve Retention and Transition NCOs for a similar list of veterans still serving in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). It is called the "Proleads Soldier Contact List".

(8) Roster of Battalion Recruiting Stations Provide all colleges within your battalion area with a roster of recruiting stations that includes mailing address, telephone number, names of assigned recruiters and e-mail addresses. Provide yearly or more often as appropriate.

(9) Student-Right-to-Know Act/Graduation-Rate Survey Notify college POCs by letter or e-mail when a student who has stopped-out of college enlists in the Army or Army Reserve. Colleges can exclude these students from calculations of graduation rates and transfer-out rates. The four categories of student stop-outs a college does not have to report are 1) those who enlist for military service, 2) those who leave for government service, 3) those who leave for religious reasons and 4) those who die or are too ill to continue.

F. Recruiters and High Schools Here are five "easy-to-do" actions to work with high school counselors to generate quality leads.

- USAR Job Vacancy Report. Deliver or e-mail this report to high school counselors once a month. Explain that MOS numbers ending in "1" are initial-entry jobs. Counselors are struck by the variety and sophistication of Army Reserve jobs and their transferability to civilian job skills. Ask counselors to post these reports for all students to see. When a student calls about a particular job, explain that the list is like the want ads in a newspaper; i.e., there is no guarantee the job is still available or the student will qualify. The next step is to take the ASVAB or review previous ASVAB scores, determine what jobs are available, etc., the normal sales presentation.

- Show the CMF/MOS/College Program Chart for local colleges

- Explain ConAP

- Explain the Army's education programs

- Explain the March 2 Success Program and how it can be used to prepare for ASVAB, SAT and ACT Testing, raise GT scores, etc.

G. Recruiters - Partners in Education

Some thoughts on what is happening in education and how recruiters can play a role:

- No Child Left Behind Act is being implemented in high schools

- Preparing students for success in college means Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2

Recruiters can use March 2 Success (M2S) to help students prepare for SAT, ACT, ASVAB, sharpen test-taking skills, and graduate from high school. They can help colleges with math and English remedial training. Recruiters influence the influencers by informing high school and college counselors, teachers, parents, and colleges with remedial programs about the March 2 Success Program (www.march2success.com). March 2 Success (M2S) is:

- 30 hour, on-line, self-paced test preparation program to help students and prospects take standardized tests or improve math and English skills.

- Free, no obligation, 24-7 program prepared by The Princeton Review.

- Provides instruction in basic math, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, reading comprehension, vocabulary, word problems, verbal testing.

- Recruiters, to order M2S Brochure: www.therecruiterstore.com or rpi@usarec.army.mil

H. Conclusion There are many ways colleges and Army Recruiters can help meet each other's needs. These are a few, your imagination will think of many more.