

## Background and Introduction

**Mission:** To conduct effective, focused, and compassionate coaching to Veterans, Guardsmen, and Reservists in post-secondary education, creating a single pathway from the military, through the campus experience, to stable employment or business ownership on Main Street.

**Objectives:** Coaching-on-Campus is an early engagement, early intervention learning program designed to support Veterans, Guardsmen, and Reservists in post-secondary education to

- Identify a satisfying and rewarding career path as they enter post-secondary education, so that the time spent on campus is seen as valuable
- Encourage engagement in the campus community, so that Veterans feel connected to the campus and experience greater satisfaction and value in the college experience
- Cultivate engagement in the classroom, to improve course grades and learning outcomes
- Increase on-time graduation or certification completion rates, reducing drop-out rates
- Translate their degree or certification into sustainable employment or business ownership, creating pathways to permanent economic resilience and life satisfaction
- Improve the integration of military experiences into their civilian lives, creating greater satisfaction in life after military service

**Needs Addressed:** The Coaching-on-Campus program design meets many of the critical needs of Veterans in post-secondary education. The experience of Veterans on campus has been a key priority for two years running for members of NASPA: Student Administrators in Higher Education. A recent study by the Aurora Foundation study shows that the Veteran dropout rate nationwide is 90%, twice the rate for non-Veteran students. Additionally, an American Psychiatric Association study shows that Veterans commit suicide on campus at six times the rate of non-Veteran students; the highest risk is for student Veterans who drop out (Student Veterans: A National Survey Exploring Psychological Symptoms and Suicide Risk).

Veterans on campus often report that they do not feel welcome or a part of the campus community. Faculty members and non-Veteran students are often described as “clueless” about the Veteran experience and/or lacking basic awareness about the war. Some Veterans relay stories about insensitive or derogatory remarks made by faculty, staff, or students about Veterans and the war. As one Veteran put it, “For my classmates, 9/11 is something they read about in high school history class; while they were playing t-ball, I was fighting in Fallujah.”

*“I don’t have a major and I don’t know what I want to do. When I was in the military, I had a sense of purpose. Now I’m taking introductory classes with a bunch of kids.”*

*“I feel like I don’t fit in here. My grades are down. I am thinking about dropping out.”*

Transition Coaching assists Veterans in integrating a life path, taking them from their introductory classes through a successful job search. It’s easier for Veterans to make it through with clear career goals and life objectives.

*“I am about to graduate and I’m not sure how to turn my military experience and my degree or certification into a job.”*

Coaching-on-Campus assists Veterans in clarifying career goals, integrating military experience and education, and communicating effectively with prospective employers so they stand out among potential hires.

Additionally, unlike the post-Vietnam era, many Veterans on campus are balancing school with work, marriage, and child-rearing. For some, managing a disability is layered on top of these competing demands. It is crucial for Veterans to engage with the campus community, experience early successes, and continue through to on-time graduation. Failure to address these critical needs will result in these Veterans entering or reinforcing a downward spiral of failure, putting the United States at significant risk of losing another generation of 2.2 million Veterans and their families to poverty, homelessness, substance abuse, mental health issues, domestic abuse, child maltreatment, incarceration, and suicide.

## The Coaching-on-Campus Program

Coaching-on-Campus (CoC) is an integrated, holistic program addressing the transition needs of post-9/11 Veterans in post-secondary education, utilizing several components:

- Coaching provided by professionally trained International Coach Federation coaches
- Use of the Career Elevator Toolkit to help Veterans identify goals and career pathways
- Use of the Forte Resilience System to quantitatively measure Veteran resilience
- Use of other personality, skill, and trait instruments to assist in identifying career strengths and goals

**Coaching Support:** What makes this program unique is its core focus on consistent, quality coaching provided by professionally trained coaches over an extended period of time, usually three to four months. Homeward Deployed coaches have all attended coaching schools accredited by the International Coach Federation and most of them hold ICF certifications. Professionally trained coaches, unlike mentors, have the professional skills and experience needed to work effectively with Veterans in transition. Additionally, coaches receive awareness training about Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, suicide prevention, and disability as it pertains to our post-9/11 Veteran population.

Through coaching, student Veterans will be challenged to see themselves in different ways, explore new frameworks to make sense of their military experiences, discover new strategies for engaging in coursework, recreate the sense of team they had with their military units, make decisions using a wider perspective and an expanded set of choices, and reflect on the benefits of making those changes.

Coaching may take place in person or over the phone. Coaches may work with individuals, groups, or a combination of the two. Coaching clients will need to have access to a computer with internet connections and a phone (cell phones and Skype are fine).

**Career Elevator ([www.TheCareerElevator.com](http://www.TheCareerElevator.com)):** The Career Elevator is an integrated toolkit that provides knowledge and focused exercises to help individuals identify, pursue, and gain employment in the career field of choice. It is designed to help students answer the question, “What’s next?” Career Elevator has been on the commercial market for five years; it has been used by thousands of students on campuses across the United States.

The program includes three basic elements: The Career Elevator Workbook, four hours of streaming video Instruction, and the Forte Self-Assessment Profile adapted to focus on career goals. The Career Elevator Toolkit is designed in seven parts, or floors: self-analysis; identification of communication style; practical tips about staying organized; résumé and cover letter; interviewing skills; understanding compensation packages; and continuing career education program.

While Career Elevator was designed to help graduating students figure out how to turn a college degree into a career, it is also proving to be a useful tool for Veterans who arrive on campus with GI Bill benefits but have no clear idea what they intend to do while on campus or with a college degree.

**The Forte Resilience System ([www.TheForteInstitute.com](http://www.TheForteInstitute.com)):** The Forte Resilience System is an online proprietary communication style reporting system that helps individuals and team improve interpersonal communication and individual effectiveness. It has been used in the global private public sectors for thirty years with more than 6.5 million unique users; it is highly validated and continually improved.

The Forte Institute provides a Primary Profile that defines communication styles along four axes of strengths: dominance/non-dominance, extroversion/introversion, patience/impatience, and conformity/non-conformity. These communication styles are tied into motivation factors and work/life atmospheres that foster success. Additionally, the Forte System has a monthly adapting update that tracks changes in resilience based on stamina and goal setting measures as well as how an individual is adapting to their environment.

**Additional Assessment Tools and Discovery Sessions:** Assessment tools can be very helpful to speed up the process of building self-awareness, a key factor closely tied to success. Coaching-on-Campus incorporates a series of assessment tools, as appropriate, including but not limited to the Forte Career Elevator, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), DiSC Assessment (DiSC), Enneagram System, Kersey Temperament Sort, and Strengths Finder.

**Wrap-around Support Services:** Student Veterans today, unlike those transitioning after Vietnam, are more likely to be married and more likely to have children. Thus, the competing needs of the student Veteran must often be balanced with the needs of a spouse and children. Additionally, our engagement in the Middle East Theater has resulted in more than 46,000

combat wounded Veterans transitioning out of the military as well as more than 200,000 cases of diagnosed traumatic brain injury and likely more than a million cases of post-traumatic stress.

Family and care-giver networks are key, and often overlooked, factors in Veteran transition; healthy relationships build Veteran resilience but relationships that disintegrate diminish resilience and a Veteran's potential for achieving permanent economic self-sufficiency. Family Resilience Coaching by very experienced, professionally trained coaches focuses on increasing family and care-giver resilience by strengthening parenting skills, improving communication, increasing teamwork capacities, expanding decision-making and problem-solving skills, reducing conflict, and creating proficiency at building and maintaining trust.

**Evaluation:** Where possible, Coaching-on-Campus pilots will be designed as control-group studies. The experimental group will receive coaching and use the Forte Resilience System; the control group will be measured using the Forte Resilience System. Coaching engagements will be offered to the control group following the completion of the pilot. Additionally, coaches will keep detailed records of all coaching sessions and Veterans will fill out monthly satisfaction reports and brief self-assessments. Homeward Deployed uses the Forte Resilience System as its quantitative measure of outcomes with all Veterans who are coached. Additionally, Homeward Deployed is working with an outside evaluation company, Visionary Consulting Partners, a preferred provider to the CDC, to provide best-practice methodology for evaluating coaching programs.

### **Key Partners—Committed**

#### Homeward Deployed

- Gretchen Martens, founder and CEO
- Lisa Carey, COO (U.S. Navy, Retired)
- Jennifer Yount, Director of Coaching (U.S. Coast Guard, Retired)
- Anne Westerfield, Director of Government Relations (U.S. Navy, Retired)

#### Career Elevator

- Norm Goldring, President
- Rob Sullivan, Director of Coaching

#### The Forte Institute

- C. D. "Hoop" Morgan, III, Founder/Chairman
- Dr. Douglas Waldrep, MD, Medical Director (U.S. Army, Retired)
- Terry Clark, Executive VP Training and Development (U.S. Marines, Retired)
- Sue Gardner, Director of Client and Special Services.
- Robert Fuller, Senior Performance Consultant
- Rae Nelson, Forté Thought Leader; Leadership Development

#### Visionary Consulting Partners

- Eleanor Thornton, CEO (U.S. Army, Retired)
- Michael Thornton, COO (U.S. Army, Retired)

## **Key Advisors—Committed and In Process**

### NASPA: Student Administrators in Higher Education

- Kevin Kruger, Deputy Executive Director (committed)
- Michelle Cyrus, Veteran Knowledge Community (pending)
- Katrina Whitney, Veteran Knowledge Community (pending)

### Student Veterans of America

- Charles Ciccolella, Board Member (U.S. Army, Retired) (committed)
- Michael Lillie, SVA Chapter President at George Mason University (committed)
- Michael Dakduk, SVA Executive Director (committed)

### International Coach Federation

- Ed Modell, President (committed)

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The key partners for a Coaching-on-Campus pilot are Homeward Deployed, school administrators or Student Veterans of America chapter presidents, and Veterans on campus.

### **Homeward Deployed**

The Homeward Deployed Team (HD) bears the primary responsibility for the management and implementation of this program. HD will create all outreach materials, co-branded with the home institution and/or SVA Chapter as desired. HD will hold virtual or face-to-face info sessions, if desired. HD will recruit, screen, and train all coaches. HD will provide all curriculum and supporting materials. HD will provide all administrative functions including tracking Veterans being coached, collecting outcomes metrics and Veteran satisfaction surveys, and handling the logistics of all assessment tools. HD will be available to provide real-time progress reports via tele-conference at the school's request. HD will provide a written report at completion of the pilot.

### **School Administrators or Student Veterans of America Chapter Presidents**

School Administrators or SVA Chapters are responsible appointing a Campus Point-of-Contact (CPoC). The campus is responsible for assisting Homeward Deployed with outreach efforts to Veterans on campus and encouraging their Veterans to participate. These efforts may be via email, introductory webinars, or face-to-face sessions. The CPoC is responsible for arranging space on campus, as needed, as well as assisting Homeward Deployed in following up with students who are having trouble following through with their commitments. Our commitment is that every Veteran student who begins the program successfully complete the program, starting or reinforcing a cycle of success.

Homeward Deployed has a culture of collaboration. We are open to customizing our programs to meet the unique needs of students on campus as well as to ensure that our programs fit with campus culture. We value a high level of openness and communication with our partners.

## **Veterans on Campus**

Veterans on campus using the full Career Elevator program must be willing to commit to spend two to three hours per week for about three months to participate in the Coaching-on-Campus program. They will have weekly scheduled coaching calls, either individually or in a group; they may also have some face-to-face group trainings. Veterans must have access to a computer with internet and a phone; cell phones or Skype are fine.

Veterans who want Transition Coaching must be willing to commit to one to two hours per week for the duration of the coaching relationship. Veterans must have access to a phone.

## **What is Professional Coaching?**

All of Homeward Deployed's programs are provided by professionally trained coaches credentialed by the International Coach Federation (ICF) and agree to adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics. Through a partnership with the ICF, Homeward Deployed is the only national Veteran-serving organization with the capacity to provide communities of coaches in every hometown in the United States using ICF's 8000+ credentialed coaches in the United States.

Coaching is a powerful, collaborative learning partnership designed exclusively around the client's goals. Focused, intentional conversations and exercises, allow clients to shift how they observe the world, opening up new possibilities for actions and results. Coaching is custom tailored to the meet needs of the client(s). Coaching may take place in person, over the phone, or a combination of the two; coaching conversations typically take place every week or every other week for 30 to 60 minutes. Brief check in calls and emails may be exchanged in between at the client's discretion. The coaching relationship will typically last three to twelve months, depending on the goals and motivation of the client(s).

Metrix Global, a professional services firm, conducted a case study showing that coaching produces a return on investment of 529% as well as considerable intangible benefits. A Manchester Inc. study reported a 570% ROI especially in areas of productivity, satisfaction, teamwork, and conflict resolution. An ICF study reported that 98.5% of coaching clients said that coaching was "very valuable" or "valuable."

Coaching is not mentoring or therapy. Mentoring is a support system for people who know where they are going but need tips and pointers to achieve their goals; most mentors have no professional training. Therapy is for clients with psychological or psychiatric issues that prevent them from moving forward with life. However, coaching may be a safe gateway to therapy for clients who cannot overcome the stigma of therapy; it can also serve as a cost-effective step-down service for clients who no longer need therapy but still need transition support.

Most credentialed coaches are graduates of ICF accredited coaching programs. These programs typically last at least nine months and include classroom intensives, reading and writing assignments, and observed coaching by a Master Certified Coach. Even the lowest level of

certification requires 100 hours of documented coaching and either graduation from an accredited coaching program or an intensive portfolio review process. All of our coaches are screened using applications and telephone interviews. Resilience coaches, who work with more vulnerable clients, are reference checked and must submit to criminal background checks.

To put Coaching-on-Campus in perspective, working with a professional coach usually costs between \$300 and \$500 per month. The retail value of the Career Elevator program and Forte Profile is \$390. The total cost of a Coaching-on-Campus package is \$1290 to \$2390, excluding administrative or evaluation overhead.

## To Explore the Fit for Your Campus or Organization

### College Campuses

Gretchen Martens, Founder and CEO

Email: [Gretchen@HomewardDeployed.org](mailto:Gretchen@HomewardDeployed.org)

Phone: 703-622-0919

### Student Veterans of America Chapters

Lisa Carey, COO

Email: [Lisa@HomewardDeployed.org](mailto:Lisa@HomewardDeployed.org)

Phone: 703-303-0496

### Federal Agencies and Veteran Serving Organizations

Anne Westerfield, Director of Government and External Relations

Email: [Anne@HomewardDeployed.org](mailto:Anne@HomewardDeployed.org)

Phone: 703-344-4910