Press Release

Release No. 2411-05

November 13, 2024

Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum Soldiers, family members planning for the future at Career and Education Fair

FORT DRUM, N.Y. – More than 100 Soldiers, family members, and Department of Defense civilians met with employers and industry and academic institution representatives Nov. 13 during the Career and Education Fair at The Peak.

While many Soldiers attended in their service uniforms, Cpl. Eric Bolling entered the career fair wearing a suit, with his resume in tow.

An intelligence analyst with 7th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI), Bolling said he hopes to pursue a career in cybersecurity after separating from the Army.

“I’m currently going to school in cybersecurity, and I’m looking for an internship in that or intel,” he said.

Bolling said that he is at the Fort Drum Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Office inside Clark Hall every week to prepare for his next career move.

“The TAP program is amazing,” he said. “I take all the workshops and classes. They’ve made it almost failproof, because it provides so many resources for anything you want to do.”

Bolling said he found a semiconductor company at the career fair that interested him, but he attended mostly to practice meeting hiring representatives.

“Honestly, I came here just to get my feet wet,” he said. “I love the interviewing process, and also the hiring process, because when it comes to deciding what company is best for you it has to be mutually beneficial.”

Maj. Lindsay Widdicombe, with 10th Mountain Division (LI) G-1, is within her six-month window for retirement, and she attended the fair to explore career options in the human resources field.

“All I have been focused on is federal jobs, so this really opened my eyes to seeing there’s more out there than that, and that I can translate my HR profession into a broader spectrum of civilian HR jobs,” she said.

She also discovered job opportunities that were local, in upstate New York, and outside the state.

“There were organizations advocating for their own states, talking about how they can help with job placement that match your career goals, skills sets, and salary,” Widdicombe said.

As part of a dual-military family with children, Widdicombe said she would prefer to remain in the area. Her husband has been stationed twice at Fort Drum, and they have been assigned here for the past four years.

“My husband is going to transition out of the Army probably about eight months after I am,” she said. “We’ve loved every part of New York, so we’d like to stay here and have some stabilization.”

She also loves her work in human resources, which is why she wants to pursue that career field when she separates from the Army.

“As an HR professional in the Army, I can enable, empower, and assist Soldiers when they need help,” Widdicombe said. “Whether I continue that in the federal side or civilian side, I still want to provide that assistance and help make people’s lives better.”

Widdicombe completed the TAP process, but she continues to take other courses while searching for employment.

“There’s an advanced resume writing class and a LinkedIn class I plan to take, because the world now is all digital and that’s a very popular place to find jobs,” she said.

Widdicombe said she is optimistic about finding the right job, but thinking about the time crunch can be worrisome.

“I am a planner,” she said. “So if I don’t feel like I have a plan right now because I don’t have a solid job lined up, it can make me a little anxious. But the career fair has kind of settled me a little, knowing there are plenty of jobs out there.”

Widdicombe said this was the first career fair she attended at Fort Drum, and if she hasn’t locked down employment before the next one, she will be certain to return.

Amanda Wells, transition services specialist, said that TAP hosts quarterly career fairs in February, May, August and November. Combining efforts with the Fort Drum Education Center twice a year provides Soldiers and family members with access to information about educational opportunities.

“Education is one of our tracks during the TAP process,” Wells said. “Some service members and spouses are planning on continuing their education when they transition out of the service. So, this is a way to help them continue their professional development as they transition to civilian life.”

Service members and spouses can register for a free Career Fair Prep Workshop through the Transition Assistance Program.

“Counselors can help them develop their elevator pitch or professional introductions and break down what positions each company is hiring for,” Wells said. “The workshop also helps build the overall confidence of the participants.”

To learn more about this workshop and other TAP courses, call (315) 772-3434 or 772-3286, or visit the TAP Office inside Clark Hall in Room C2-14.

###

Media with questions regarding this press release should contact Fort Drum Public Affairs, Katie Wright, 315-772-9043 or katherine.e.wright12.civ@army.mil

Photo Captions –

1: Fort Drum Soldiers speak with employers and industry representatives about future job opportunities Nov. 13 during the Career and Education Fair inside The Peak. More than 90 employers and 30 educational institutions and veteran support organizations attended the quarterly event hosted by the Fort Drum Transition Assistance Program and the Fort Drum Education Center. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

2: Fort Drum Soldiers explore educational opportunities with representatives from dozens of academic institutions in attendance Nov. 13 at the Career and Education Fair inside The Peak. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)