



Student Veterans of America

SVA Virtual Chapter Toolkit & Professional Development Resources

PURPOSE

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide resources and materials to help run an effective chapter in a virtual environment. While the future remains unknown, developing the ability to operate in a remote or entirely virtual modality will be valuable to your chapter operations. We have reached out to many of our partners and performed a comprehensive review of available materials to provide you with the leading practices and best-in-class resources for running a chapter amidst these uncertain times. This toolkit is meant to be used in whatever manner you find it to be valuable. We are always looking for feedback to help improve the resources we offer, so please feel free to reach out to us anytime at 202-223-4710, or by email at contact@studentveterans.org.



Operating in a Crisis

Operating in a virtual environment presents unique challenges and opportunities, especially when the future remains uncertain. Amidst this current crisis, chapter leaders like you have learned to adjust and are staying engaged with leadership teams, members, and partners. Our friends at the [McChrystal Group](#) developed a guidebook of resources and advice to improve your current chapter operations and may offer some helpful insights for moving forward.

SECTION 1: Leading Through Crisis

Leaders are critical in crisis response – now more than ever, they must balance the steps needed to keep the organization viable and the team committed.

SECTION 2: Assess Your Operating Environment

Define the current reality, both internally and externally. Based on what you know (i.e., facts) and what you believe to be true (i.e., assumptions), develop a prioritized plan.

SECTION 3: Align Your Team

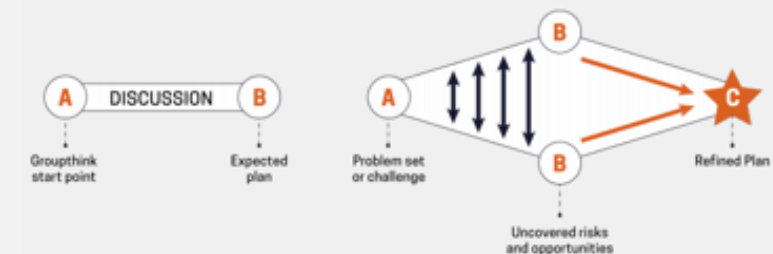
Decide on the plan, coordinate it horizontally across your leadership team, and then cascade it vertically within your organization. Set simple rules for communication that will provide you with the feedback loops you will require to adjust your plan as the environment changes – which it will.

SECTION 4: Act on Your Plan

Ensure communications are robust and frequent enough to empower leaders at every level, so that you are receiving regular feedback on what is working, what is not, and what has changed in your operating environment. Based on this feedback, restart the cycle and adjust your plan.



[Download Guidebook](#)



Keeping Your SVA Chapter Running

Virtual delivery has been a major disruption to colleges and universities across the country, with most institutions offering mixed delivery, in some cases operating entirely online. With this switch to a virtual world, SVA Chapters can stay connected and keep engagement with their membership using various online resources and technologies.

Zoom for Chapter Meetings & Events

Hold virtual meetings and host virtual chapter events, townhalls, socials, happy hours, etc. through a virtual webinar software like Zoom or Skype.

Slack for Group Communications

Consider using a collaboration hub for group communications to chapter members and a place to plan chapter related activities with an app like Slack or Microsoft Teams.

SVA Programs & Services

The Programs & Services team at SVA's National Headquarters are here to help connect you to opportunities through SVA chapter programs, leadership training, career readiness and professional development, and volunteer-based programming for your SVA chapter.

Veterati to Connect to Mentors

Establish a connection and learn from a mentor through an app like Veterati, a free online mentorship platform for service members, veterans, and military spouses.



*The SVA Chapter at **Fordham University** utilizing Zoom to stay connected during COVID-19 for a chapter event.*

Take Steps to “Assess, Align, Act”

The **Assess, Align, Act** steps are repeated at a frequency that matches the rate of change in your operating environment. Every time you turn this wheel it should take less and less time to complete, since you will become capable of validating assumptions, incorporating new facts, and implementing changes faster and faster.

1. Communicate with greater intensity and regularity
2. Be inclusive
3. Know the limits of your crisis response team
4. The camera is your new best friend
5. Lead with purpose
6. Over-communicate confidence in your team
7. Re-evaluate successful decision-making frameworks and set decision boundaries where possible
8. Establish clearly understood accountability mechanisms
9. Broadcast decision milestones
10. Trust more than ever



Figure 1: In the Leading through Crisis Framework, the outer loop represents the outcomes necessary to emerge on the other side of a crisis, and the inner loop reflects the associated fundamental actions leaders must take to lead during a crisis.

[Download: “Operating in Crisis: A Leader’s Guide”](#)

Running Meetings in Remote

Meetings should be productive, to the point and not waste time

- SVA Chapter Members and Leaders often live busy lives

Schedule meetings at a time when members can attend

- Have an alternative platform for those who can't attend
- Consider privacy level
 - Meetings open to the public should feel welcoming

Announce the meeting via email and social media

- Announcements should be short, visually appealing
- Send reminders the day before and one-hour prior to meeting

Create and circulate a public and private meeting agenda

Start and end the meeting on time

- Appoint a time-keeper if necessary
- Build in breaks for long meetings
- Take and record attendance
- Make introductions when new members or guests are present
- Follow the agenda
- Establish what needs to be discussed
 - Encourage open ended discussions
 - Straw polls or a show of hands is an effective way to gauge how the group is thinking
 - Always confirm when an issue is settled or tabled for a later date before moving on to next topic
- Summarize the decisions made and outstanding items on the agenda
- Verbally confirm any specific actions

Adjourn the meeting and announce the date and time of the next meeting

[Five Expert Tips for Running Effective Virtual Meetings](#)

[9 Ways To Reassure And Re-Engage Your Team](#)

[12 Tips For Making Your Virtual Meetings More Professional](#)

Outreach & Recruitment

Having and maintaining a regular and consistent presence through social media is a must for an SVA Chapter. During these trying times where we are encountering online courses, working from home, and social distancing, utilizing social media will be the key to keeping your chapter and your community connected.

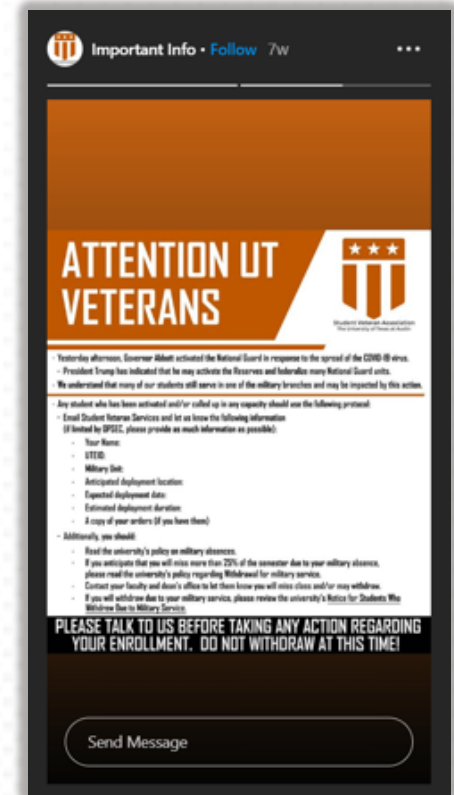
Facebook Live: Provide Updates and Host Virtual Chapter Events

Facebook Live lets you livestream events, performances and gatherings on Facebook. Viewers can watch from a phone, computer or connected TV. Reactions, shares, comments, and other interactive features enable you to engage with your audience.



Instagram Stories: Provide a Snapshot, Conduct a Poll, and Keep Your Chapter Membership Encouraged

With over 500 million people posting 1 billion Instagram Stories every day, your chapter can certainly reach a wider audience and help others stay connected to opportunities, news updates, and any virtual or in-person events.



Event Planning Tips

When planning an event consider the type of event:

- Flagship events are the main event a chapter throws, it's the event the campus community identifies with your chapter
 - The Annual Student Veterans Gala
 - The Veterans Day Banquet
- Ensure event diversity, inclusivity, and goal alignment
- Identify on-campus and community opportunities for growth
 - Joint fundraising events with other student orgs
 - Joint events with local community orgs such as the VFW/American Legion
 - Restaurant events or catering

Organize a group of volunteers to work as a planning committee and divide tasks among the group

- Consider the skillset, knowledge base, and personal networks of each member when delegating responsibilities
- Establish a clear understanding of how much time each member can commit and lay out a clear set of expectations

Remember your target audience when deciding on a date, time and location

- Consider the needs of students, parents, those with full-time jobs, etc.
- If necessary, check with the local government for licensing and permits

Outline a realistic budget for your event, consider all costs associated with the event or activity

- Set realistic fundraising goals, particularly if you don't want the budget to exceed donations
- Consider using an online service like Eventbrite for ticketed events

Be sure to register your event with the college/university or proper community officials

Create flyers, posters, brochures, invitations, tickets and an email blast to notify your target audience

Creating an agenda, or run-of-show to keep the program on schedule and inform your guests as to the order of events

After hosting the event, be sure to thank your guests for attending

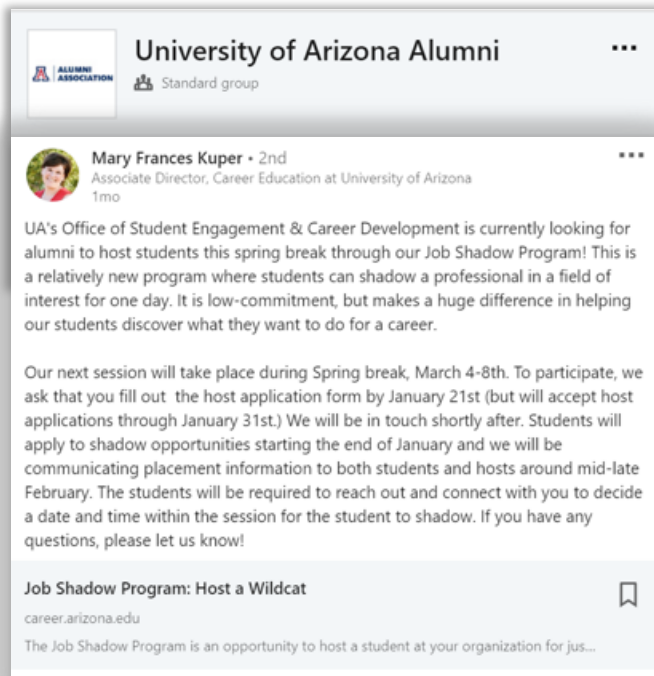
- Remind everyone why the event was held and how they can support your chapter
- Give a special thanks to those who made the event possible by donating time, money, resources, talents, or skills

Sometimes guests will pledge a donation during the event, this requires a polite follow-up phone call or email or outreach via social media

- Host a follow-up meeting to discuss the event, what went well what could be improved upon

Leverage the LinkedIn Community

- Use LinkedIn Groups to build networks and for professional development.
- Mobilize and invite **student veterans, alumni, mentors, industry experts, community partners, and employers.**
- Optimize Group experience by sharing professional opportunities and events happening on campus and local community.



University of Arizona Alumni Standard group

Mary Frances Kuper • 2nd
Associate Director, Career Education at University of Arizona
1mo

UA's Office of Student Engagement & Career Development is currently looking for alumni to host students this spring break through our Job Shadow Program! This is a relatively new program where students can shadow a professional in a field of interest for one day. It is low-commitment, but makes a huge difference in helping our students discover what they want to do for a career.

Our next session will take place during Spring break, March 4-8th. To participate, we ask that you fill out the host application form by January 21st (but will accept host applications through January 31st.) We will be in touch shortly after. Students will apply to shadow opportunities starting the end of January and we will be communicating placement information to both students and hosts around mid-late February. The students will be required to reach out and connect with you to decide a date and time within the session for the student to shadow. If you have any questions, please let us know!

Job Shadow Program: Host a Wildcat
career.arizona.edu

The Job Shadow Program is an opportunity to host a student at your organization for jus...



SOCIETE GENERALE **TD Ameritrade**

STUDENT VETERAN INTERNSHIP FAIR

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2018
11:00 AM - 3:30 PM

FORDHAM LAW, COSTANTINO ROOM
150 WEST 62ND STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10023

Open to all student veterans

To register and additional details:
bit.ly/Internship-Fair-2018

List of companies and employers here:
bit.ly/Internship-Fair-Homepage

FORDHAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION **VETERANS ON CAMPUS**



Fordham Veterans Association Standard group

Steven Hellman • 1st
Relationship Manager at Fordham University Student Veteran Association
6mo

Fordham University's Veteran Association will be hosting a student veteran internship fair September 24th.

ALL NYC STUDENT VETERANS are welcome and encouraged to attend.

To register: bit.ly/Internship-Fair-2018

List of companies and employers: bit.ly/Internship-Fair-Homepage

Hosted by Fordham Veterans Association

#business #marketing #education #internship #wealthmanagement #veterans

Fundraising

Whether operating on-campus or virtually, SVA Chapters will seek to establish revenue streams in order to pay for chapter operations. One potential revenue stream is through the Student Government Association or through other student organizations/entities on campus. Most schools will have explicit guidelines for student organization funding, learn and understand the process for accessing funds from your campus and the stipulations on how money can be spent.

[20 Virtual Fundraising Ideas During COVID-19](#)

In lieu of more traditional on-campus events like galas or donations, creativity will be needed to host virtual fundraisers and events.

[Classy's Nonprofit Digital Marketing Checklist](#)

In order to conduct a successful fundraising campaign, make sure you consider your Chapter's brand and develop a marketing campaign for any fundraisers.

Peer-to Peer Fundraising Platforms

Virtual platforms like [Classy](#), [GoFundMe](#), or [IndieGoGo](#) are powerful tools for Chapters to set-up fundraising campaigns, mobilize fundraising teams, and create a fundraising page for your Chapter and for events.

Key Considerations:

- Finding the appropriate donors and matching their interests with the needs of the chapter requires a unique combination of skill and perseverance.
- Many potential donors want to support your cause because they already believe in your mission.
- Alumni who have directly benefited from your SVA Chapter are a great place to start.
- People invest in people they believe in.
- Always follow up and maintain your relationships.

Officer Elections

In a time when innovative leadership is needed, student veterans are eager to both be involved in your chapter and serve as a leader of your SVA Chapter. In a virtual world, there are a few tools and considerations to have a successful and effective chapter election.

[Election Runner – Digital Election Software for Clubs](#)

Create an election for your school or organization in seconds. Your voters can vote from any location on any device.

[How to Conduct Online Club Officer Elections Guide \(Toastmasters Int.\)](#)

When it is time to host elections or vote in new leadership, it is helpful to follow guidelines that are clear to both candidates and to voters.

Key Considerations:

- Define leadership positions and responsibilities in writing.
- Continuously recruit and grow new leaders.
- Recruit your replacement from day one.
- Use chairmanships as intermediate leadership positions to empower Chapter Members.
- Find the balance between leader entrenchment and smooth succession.
- Formalize your elections and transition processes.
- **Build future leaders—make them want to be in your shoes!**

Managing Governing Documents

Manage your records, history, and activities to prevent duplication of efforts in successive years. With technology and operating in a virtual world, your Chapter needs a records management system. This preserves important documents and ensures that they are accessible to current and future members.

Document

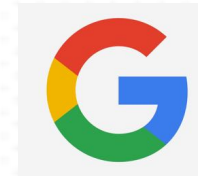
This may take many forms including written meeting notes, event fliers, important campus and community contacts and helpful processes.

Organize

Follow a simple file plan to avoid loss of knowledge when leadership changes.

Store

Many options exist for storing your records, including paper files and binders, flash drives, external hard drives and online storage sites. Create continuity binders that can be easily passed down to future leaders. Because many Chapters are virtual, backup documents in cloud-based services and platforms.



Use free resources available from [Google](#) or [Microsoft](#) to share documents, agendas, resources, and more.

Chapter Resources

[SVA Economic Opportunity Resources](#)

SVA is working with its partners to provide economic, employment, and professional development resources for students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

[SVA Chapter Budget Template](#)

Creating and keeping a budget is an important part of operating and growing your chapter. Utilize this resource as a template for your Chapter budget.

[SVA Event Planning Checklist](#)

Utilize the event planning checklist to better plan and conduct a meeting or event for your SVA Chapter.

[SVA Chapter Branding](#)

The Student Veterans of America logo and wordmark are for the use & enjoyment of all registered chapters. Make use of consistent branding and highlight your Chapter with the national brand.

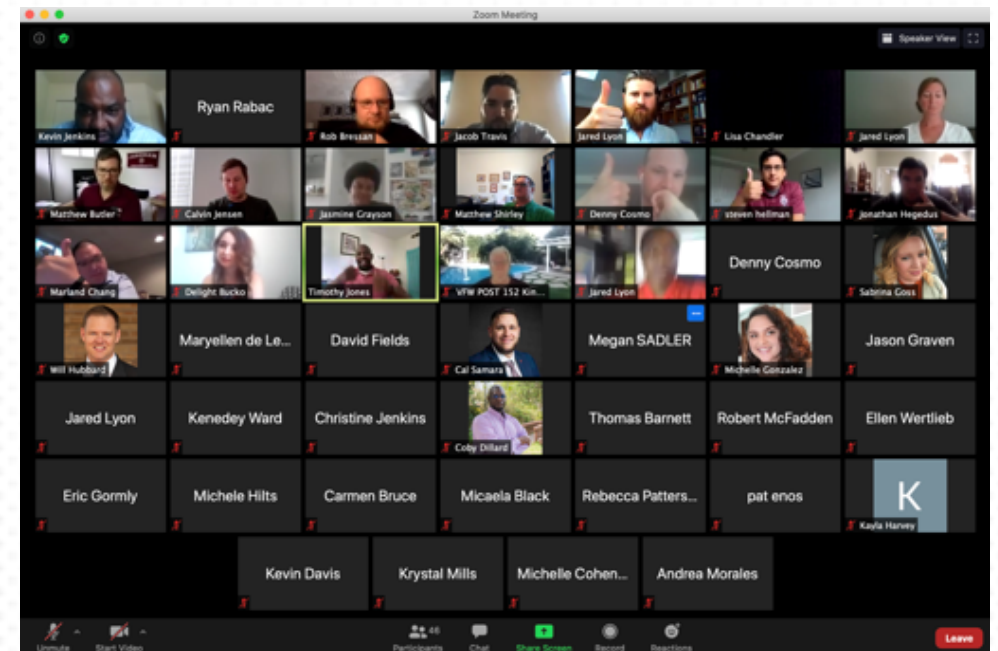


Engage in SVA's Fireside Chat Series

Join us for a series of fireside chats all summer long with SVA Headquarters leadership on topics such as: leading practices to host virtual chapter meetings, chapter fundraising strategies, membership recruitment, driving participation while socially distancing, national policy and campus advocacy, and more.

Join us for one fireside chat or all five. Your National Headquarters Team will host each session along with special guests from SVA's Alumni Community.

- ✓ **Surviving COVID-19:** How to maintain and grow an SVA Chapter while complying with social distancing guidelines.
- ✓ **From the Hill to the Quad:** How government legislation shapes the higher ed landscape for student veterans.
- ✓ **The Paper Chase:** A discussion focusing on the best practices for fundraising.
- ✓ **Rolling with the Punches:** A discussion about taking the good with the bad while developing an SVA Chapter.
- ✓ **Strength in Numbers:** A discussion about growing an SVA Chapter through effective recruitment while fostering a fully engaged membership.



[Learn more and Register](#)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SVA's COVID-19 Economic Opportunity Resources

In these unprecedented and difficult times surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, Student Veterans of America is working with its partners to provide economic, employment, and professional development resources for students affected by the [COVID-19 pandemic](#). SVA has developed this toolkit to assist our chapters and student veterans with staying engaged and connected.

Ongoing Research

SVA champions data-driven decision making on veteran issues by policy makers, stakeholders, and thought leaders.

- Opinion polling
- Program Learning & Measurement
- Policy solutions

Economic Opportunity

SVA is working with our partners at some of the world's largest corporations and employers to provide mentorship, resources, and opportunities for student veterans and chapters.

Some of these partners include:

- LinkedIn
- Indeed
- Hiring Our Heroes
- Veterans Benefits Administration

Direct Services

SVA offers various opportunities, resources, and community engagement initiatives for chapters and student veterans.

- Economic Opportunity resources and toolkits
- Virtual fireside chats on supporting chapters and student veterans
- Advocacy and engagement with Congress through townhalls
- Cross-generation veteran volunteer call campaigns
- Promoting and supporting volunteerism with partners like Team Rubicon, offering Disaster Relief training and support

View more resources at: resources.studentveterans.org

Manage Your GI Bill Benefits



Veterans Benefits Administration continues to provide Veterans with benefits and services while shifting to a virtual environment in response to the Coronavirus. Many in-person services are already available over the phone or online, and VBA is expanding the use of existing technologies to remain accessible to Veterans, service members, and their families.



Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)

If you have a service-connected disability that limits your ability to work or prevents you from working, the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program—also referred to as Chapter 31—can help.



Educational and Career Counseling Program

Find out how to apply to get free Veteran Educational and Career Counseling services. You may be eligible if you're leaving active service soon, if you've been discharged within the past year, or if you're the dependent of a Veteran.



VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) Program

The VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program aims to help Veterans, Servicemembers, and their qualified dependents succeed and thrive through a coordinated delivery of on-campus benefits assistance and counseling, leading to completion of their education and preparing them to enter the labor market in viable careers.

VBA is Hiring

If you or someone you know is interested in a new career path, VBA offers many professional opportunities to both Veterans and civilians looking for new ways to serve. Careers offering competitive salaries, retirement plans, and paid leave are currently available.

[GI Bill Updates](#)

Join and Engage in SVA's Professional Development Community

Student Veterans, SVA Chapters, Alumni, Mentors, Industry Experts, and Employers: join SVA's Professional Development Community—your exclusive career network. This group is the perfect place to ask questions, share opportunities, and hone your skills in a variety of fields. It all starts with adding your voice to the conversation! This is the perfect place to search and post available job/internship opportunities, seek mentorship and professional guidance from experts and partners, and where to connect with other professionals in the student veteran community.



Tips for Engagement

- Introduce yourself and what you are seeking from the community.
- Create a career plan for opportunities you are seeking (i.e. internships, jobs, mentorship, personal/professional development, advice about a professional resource or program, etc.)
- Develop an action plan to see your vision come to fruition.
- Join an established support and follow-up network with your fellow community members, mentors, and employers. Do the same for your chapter members.

[Join SVA's Professional Development Community](#)

Leverage Our LinkedIn Partnership



SVA has partnered with LinkedIn to teach student veterans how to establish and define your professional identity, develop network relationships, build professional development opportunities, and conduct training to student veterans on how to leverage career success. We are also educating recruiters on how to tap into a larger pool of high achieving student veterans, promoting continued service of alumni through mentorship opportunities, and further solidifying SVA as a thought leader in the veteran career development space.

[LinkedIn for Student Veterans Training Webinars](#)

In this training you will learn how to tell your professional story and build an effective profile, build and maintain a professional support network, search and find jobs and internship opportunities, and maintain and advance your professional development.

[Access to LinkedIn Premium and LinkedIn Learning](#)

Access your 1-year free Premium Career subscription to help you get noticed by recruiters, build out your network, stay in the know on new jobs that fit with your skills, and easily apply for new opportunities.

[LinkedIn's Veterans Opportunity Report](#)

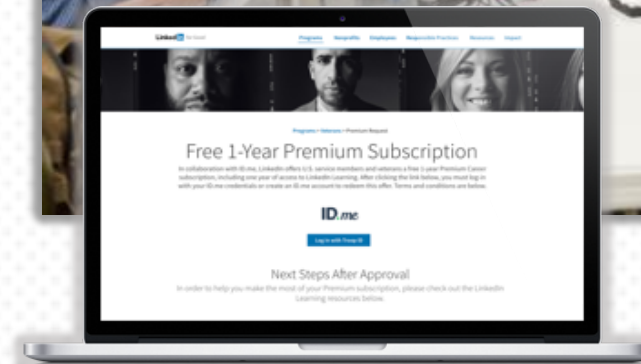
Powered by LinkedIn data and insights, explores the current state of veteran employment and how challenging it can be for veterans to face the realities of not doing work that makes full use of their skills and abilities.

[Jobs in Demand](#)

Check the most current hiring needs and updates in the U.S.

[How to Use LinkedIn](#)

Tutorial on the basics of how to use LinkedIn.



Leverage Indeed For Jobs



Indeed is working with SVA to connect student veterans to a suite of resources and available opportunities. Indeed's Military & Veterans Programs has put together a comprehensive resource guide on job seeker info and opportunities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic for veteran job seekers.

Economic Data Trends

[Indeed's Economic & covid19 related data](#)

[Coronavirus and US Job Postings: Data from Indeed.com](#)

[Webinar: The Impact of COVID-19 on the US Economy](#)

Leverage Resources on Indeed's New Veteran-Focused Website

veterans.indeed.com

Complete Veteran Guide to Starting your Job Search

[Indeed for Veterans – Job Search](#)



Get Professional Help with your Resume

Indeed's military-transition experts are ready to review your resume today.

[Professional Resume Review](#)

Connect with Hiring Our Heroes



The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes initiative is helping us connect opportunities from the nation's network of state and local chambers and strategic partners from public, private, and non-profit sectors to our chapters and student veterans.

[Attend Virtual & In-Person Career Events](#)

A series of virtual events with top employers and career experts from across the country.

[Leverage HOH's Career Community](#)

A virtual education and training center that allows our nation's military community to engage in world-class career curriculum.

[HOH's Digital Resources](#)

An innovative suite of digital tools for veterans, service members, military spouses, and employers.

[Programs For Military Spouses](#)

A variety of programs and events for military spouses.



#WeAreSVA

Stay in touch with us:



www.studentveterans.org



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/student-veterans-of-america>



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