[Moderator]
Day two of the 2018 Virtual Military Spouse Symposium. My name is Eddy Mentzer and I lead the Department of Defense's Spouse Education and Career opportunities program, the host for this week's symposium. We had an awesome set of presentations yesterday and we are excited about all of our sessions today. Whether this is your first session of the symposium, or you were with us all day yesterday, welcome again. As always, please use the chat pod to ask any questions and share your experiences with your fellow military spouses. A resounding topic throughout yesterday's presentations was networking, so how about to discuss LinkedIn and specific resources for military spouses during the build your brand track. Our next presenter is Dan Savage, the head of LinkedIn's veterans program. Dan is going to try and squeeze in a two hour presentation into the next 45 minutes. So I'm going to be quiet and turn it over to him. Dan it's all yours.

[Dan]
Good morning, Eddy, thank you so much. Yeah, you'll know for anyone who's seen me do the full up long presentation, you'll notice I've built a fairly abbreviated option here today. And I think this'll give you a good sorta teaser. We're working with DOD to make sure that they get the sort of broader curriculum so that you'll have access to this as well. We've got an hour today. I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak to all of you. I see we're almost at 100 folks in the session. And I'm out here on the West Coast. So for those of you who are out here with me, I very much appreciate you guys getting up to listen to me talk about LinkedIn. Yeah, Eddy and I have been working together for a while now to find ways better to support the community. And I just wanted to sort of highlight. I'm not a military spouse, I'm a military vet myself. So I served in the army on active duty for five years. And to be frank, just saw the challenges that military spouses face day-to-day. I was stationed in little rural area of Germany, for those who've been out there. A little place called Vilseck, which there is like basically no economy out there in the middle of nowhere. And I've seen my best friends and their spouses travel from base-to-base. And when we go there, for example, there just really wasn't a whole lot of opportunity to be had out there and so I really understand that oftentimes for military spouses, no matter how qualified you are, it can still be a challenge. And hopefully you'll see today some tools that we have that can help you get over that so you can actually maybe do some remote work, maybe some freelancing opportunities that we can help you find. But then when you do know that you're going to a place, you know, I would say rural Germany is a bit of an outlier, but if you do know you're going to a place that has some economic opportunity for you to take advantage of, how do you make sure that you're prepped prior to a PCS to make the most of that
transition. If you get your orders six months in advance, for example, how do you make sure that you're making the most of that? But I just wanna start off by expressing my appreciation for the military spouse community and for really the effort that it takes to make sure that you're sort of maintaining a career from PCS to PCS. I mentioned one of my good friends, again, name Chris Turner. I was just on the phone with him the other day. His wife, throughout his military career, he's been in for 13 years now. She's done a bachelor's degree online. She was a teacher for a while. She got to a new base and there weren't any teaching opportunities. And so now she's, like literally the other day I was talking to Chris and I said, "Hey, tell Katrina I said hi." He said, "Yeah, I will, she's over there "doing classes again, online, getting another certificate." So I very much appreciate the hard work that it takes to maintain a career as a military spouse. But I think the tagline here, "You're Closer Than You Think," this is something I say to veterans as well. Hopefully with LinkedIn you'll see that maybe that dream that you've got out there, maybe that goal, whether it's starting your own business or being a freelancer or working remotely for a company or even working and maybe you get to Seattle with Joint Base Lewis-McChord and you got a bunch more sort of robust options, whatever that dream is, you're only a couple steps away from that, even though it may feel really far away sometimes. And hopefully you'll be able to see through our presentation today and our ongoing work with DOD that that's really the case. So today the real focus to the conversation, or the underlying theme here, I'll be covering the top five things I think you guys should know moving forward. And then, as I said, we're gonna be arming the SECO team with some broader curriculum to really dig into the details of all the various product features and what not. So if you do have remaining questions, obviously, put 'em in the chat room here. But then you should, the SECO team should be prepared pretty well to answer your ongoing questions. So the first content I really wanna kinda highlight for you here is this notion that every click is tied to an algorithm. And what do I mean by that? When you're using like LinkedIn, this comment is really meant to be empowering and nonintimidating. You really are in full control. LinkedIn is much more than a place to put your resume online, for example. This is really a whole ecosystem. Your profile is the key that unlocks a much broader ecosystem. But the inputs that you put in to our system are gonna feed what the outputs are. And so what do I mean by that? And I'll go to the next slide here. Actually, as I was reviewing my slides this morning, I realized I missed maybe a few features here in this slide. So I'll talk about some things that aren't represented visually here. But the first thing is just your newsfeed. So when you go in every morning or every day and look at your LinkedIn, you're scrolling through LinkedIn, your feed should really be an incredibly useful and rich tool for you. A tool for information, a tool for learning, you know, you should be following companies and following influencers. And if you're interested at working in a specific company, make sure you reach out to and connect with as many recruiters that you can find at that company. Because every day, people are posting things that end up in that feed that are gonna be, especially for the military and the spouse community, these are two communities that are incredibly active on LinkedIn. There are tons and tons of resources. Like this morning I liked and shared a post from the MSEP team that shared the registration link to my session here. Just things like that, there's a ton of resources that are floating around within the news feed that are really valuable. But this notion that every click is connected to an algorithm, that you're the one who creates that feed. So you create that feed based on who you're connected to, what you're liking, what you're following, et cetera. So if that feed's not working for you, you can unfollow people. You can go find other people. And I would recommend, you'll see here in a moment, why it's so important to do this, but I would recommend any company that you're ever potentially interested in working for someday, make sure you're following their company page on LinkedIn, because that feed, that's gonna make sure then that your feed is full of information about that company. Next thing is job preferences. So if you're on LinkedIn, you go to your home page, right up at that top, you'll see a couple little icons. The one looks like a little briefcase, that's the Jobs tab. Make sure you click that. And right up at the top there, there should be a hyperlink that says Career Preferences. I can't overemphasize the importance of making sure that you go in there and you highlight what your career preferences are, because when you go back to that jobs tab and you look at all the jobs that we're recommending for you, if you've got premium, for example, we'll be even tell you sort of where you stack up against other candidates. All of that is driven by... The algorithms that create that Recommended Jobs page are entirely driven by your choices and the industries that you've chosen on your career preferences, the locations that you've chosen, the job titles, et cetera. So really thinking through
like you control the backend of our system to some extent. So anywhere that you see preferences, even if
you just go to your home page. And on that sort of front card there on your profile, if you click that little
pencil, it'll bring up a series of preferences you can choose from. Your location is one of those things that
when you're ready, when you move to, when you get orders, for example, to move to a new location, as
soon as you know, hey, and I apologize for the Navy and Marine Corps folks. All my examples are Army,
'cause that's what I was. But if you're stationed at Fayetteville, North Carolina, and you know, hey, it's time
to move to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, as soon as you know that, you wanna change the location on your
profile, because if a recruiter's looking for people like you, maybe a recruiter in Nashville or in Clarksville,
Tennessee, is looking for people with a certain skillset, and you've got that exact skillset, if you haven't
changed your location, you're not gonna pop up in their search, right? 'Cause they're looking for
professionals like you in their area. And in your summary section on your profile, you can write out the
notion that, "Hey, it's listed as Clarksville. "I'm actually currently stationed Fayetteville, "North Carolina and
I'll be moving "in the next three months." So you're being fully transparent. And you're being fully honest
about your status. But there's a way to sort of use the algorithms to work for you. You'll also see on this
screen here, I won't read through everything.Listing your work and education properly. What do I mean by
this? When you choose, for example, you know, a lot of people, when you're writing in the experience
section of your profile, you're choosing your employer. Some people just type in their employer. And you'll
see what we call type-ahead. It's almost like that Google auto-fill, where we'll recommend a bunch of
pages to you. Make sure you find the page that's actually associated with the company you work for. And
the same goes for your school. If you're writing that you went to... Like my sister just got a graduate
degree from University of Illinois, Chicago. If she had written University of Illinois, Chicago Campus, that's
not an actual page on LinkedIn. Whereas, she chose University of Illinois, Chicago, that's an actual page. So
the importance of this is when people are searching for people who went to University of Illinois, Chicago,
or when people are searching for people who used to work for the following companies or currently do
work for the following companies, you've chosen the right page, you've tagged yourself, if you will, in our
system, in our database, that you're actually someone who's worked there or gone to that school. You can
see, should be fairly obvious, you absolutely need a profile picture. When you're thinking about your skills,
you can add up to 50 skills on your profile. And I always like to say if we give you 50 options as to how to,
you know, it's basically 50 dimensions to who you are as a professional, that you can represent, you're
missing out if you don't list that 50. Because, again, I'll show you in just a second here a tool that our
recruiters use, that recruiters across the country, is every Fortune 500 company uses. And they're
searching based off of those skillsets. They're searching based off of locations and past companies and
what not. So you really wanna make sure you're intentional about the things that you choose, the things
that you click on, how you set your preferences, because it really does matter. But one thing I really wanna
flag for everyone. One of the things that we've struggled with in the past, in terms of LinkedIn's ability to
support military spouses is there is now way, where if you list out you're a former employee of the US
Army, I know you're a veteran, right? But there's no real clear field on your LinkedIn profile where you can
say, "I'm a military spouse." And I know, actually, that some military spouses don't wanna put that on their
profile, because they feel like that may open them up to discrimination from employers that are thinking,
"Oh, this person's not in it for the long haul. "They're just gonna get up and move, et cetera." So our
workaround for this. I can't emphasize enough the importance of joining this group, the Military Spouse
Employment Partnership Group. This group is run by Eddy and his team. And this is basically the official
way to represent yourself now, via partnership between LinkedIn and Department of Defense. This is how
you represent yourself as a military spouse. And so when we go to recruiters, 'cause recruiters will come to
me and say, "Hey, Dan, how do we find and hire military spouses "on LinkedIn?" We're gonna be telling
them they need to join this group but they also need to use this group as a tag in this next platform that I'll
show you, which is our recruiter software. And so a lot of folks, I think, think of Internet companies, they
think about, oh, the way that these companies make money is off of advertising, well, for LinkedIn, really,
we get paid by companies to help them find top talent. And so we have to build these really complex tools
to help them narrow down our 560 million users worldwide to maybe the top five candidates that they
should be considering hiring. So this is what this platform looks like. It's a little a little more powerful if I'm
able to demonstrate this to you live, but essentially what this looks like, there are dozens and dozens of
filters that recruiters can choose from when they're searching for people like you. And so they can choose based off of your current location, current company, how many years you've been in your role, how many years you've been at your company, whether you're actively looking for work or not. They can look at what languages you speak, what you studied in college, what your skills are, what your job titles are, any level of sort of... Any dimension of your profile they can search for. And so I wanted to show you this to show you a couple different things. One is why you should definitely join that group. So you'll see right here, I've highlighted two of the filters within Recruiter, All Groups and My Groups. And as I mentioned before, we're gonna be telling recruiters moving forward, we're telling recruiters, "Hey, if you wanna hire a military spouse, "you need to click that All Groups filter "and type in the MSEP group." So make sure you go in there, and tell all of your friends go in there and join the Military Spouse Employment Partnership Group, because that is now the official group by which recruiters will be looking for for you. And so the way you find this, I see a question in the feed, when you go to your home page, just type in military, I'll actually go back a second so you can get the full name of the group. If you type in Military Spouse Employment Partnership, MSEP group, there's actually a page, and I see someone just put a link to it in the chat here, there's a page that you could look at the MSEP page, but you wanna make sure you're going to the group page as well. And so make sure you join this group. And then recruiters will be able to find you. But the other way that this platform works, you can see here that this search that I did here, looking for a program manager in San Francisco, and I think I searched for military veteran and someone who's got a bachelor's degree, et cetera. You can see these numbers right up at the top here. And I wanna highlight for ya' before we move forward what these numbers mean. So the first one is 617. That means that there's 617 people that met the criteria of my search. So recruiters are incentivized based on time to hire. So if a hiring manager comes to a recruiter and says, "Hey, I'm looking for the next program manager "to hire for my team." That recruiter, they need to find the best person for that job as quickly as possible. And so obviously that recruiter's not gonna go filtering through 617 LinkedIn profiles to find the best person. So, one, they're either gonna add another couple dimensions to their search to narrow that number down. But if you start to look at these numbers to the right, 129 of those, 617 are more likely to respond. What does this mean? These are our most active users. So these are the folks that have come in in the last month and done things, they've liked things, they've shared things, they've commented on people's posts, or they've sent messages to people or applied for jobs. But these are the people that are most actively using LinkedIn. So if I'm a recruiter and I'm gonna send a bunch of messages out to people who I think are qualified for the job, I'm definitely gonna only start with those 129, 'cause I know I'm not gonna be wasting my time by sending a message out to someone who I don't know if they're gonna respond to me. 64, though, are open to new opportunities. And those 64 people, there's actually literally one button in your Career Preferences tab that you can choose that will put you into this bucket. And it literally is open to opportunities, open to new opportunities. This is a secret way to signal so it won't represent, it won't actually be on your profile. It will only pop up in this sort of backend platform, if you will. And the recruiters are your own company can't see that you have checked this box off, either. So you don't have to worry about getting in trouble with your current employer 'cause you've checked this box to say, "Hey, I'm looking for a job." But on that page, on that Career Preferences page, we also let you tell us what your transition date it. So if you know that you're gonna be PCSing in six months. Go in there, select the Open to New Opportunities button, but then also check off the date that you're available for hire so that you're setting reasonable expectations for recruiters. And then the last thing on the right here, it says 69 are engaged with our talent brand. So what does that mean? Every company has a page on LinkedIn, a company page. 69 people, 'cause I was looking at this through my own account, 69 of those 617 have liked or followed LinkedIn's company page on LinkedIn, and, again, done something. They've liked something we've shared, they've commented on it. They've reshared it themselves, et cetera. And so those are the people that are demonstrating, based on their behavior on LinkedIn, that they're interested in our company in some way. So if I'm a recruiter and I'm thinking through, obviously, I'm only gonna look at those far two, the two buckets on the right. I'm only gonna be looking at the ones that are people who are interested in working at my company and people who are actively looking for work. And if I can't find what I'm looking for there, I'm gonna start looking further to the left. But you get the point here. Everything that you do on LinkedIn is gonna help you get into the search board, the search results for a recruiter. And, again, one more time, I'll say it again by the
time we end probably, but, please, please, please, I'll go back one more slide. Make sure you join this MSEP group, because that, again, is gonna be the way that we highlight you for recruiters. Number two, prepare for PCS far in advance. I think a lot of folks, often, unfortunately, they really start their job search, for folks that are transitioning out of the military far too late in their transition process. And for a military spouse, if you get orders, I know that sometimes orders pop up and it's like, okay, we gotta go somewhere in a month. But sometimes you know where you're headed next six months or a year in advance. As soon as you know those things, you need to get on LinkedIn and start networking. And what do I mean by networking? Specifically, you need to find people who you can seek advice from. You wanna find people to reach out to, to schedule informational interviews and learn more about what they do and what their company is about and whether you'd be a good fit, because it takes a long time to actually find the right next opportunity as opposed to just a paycheck. And so how do you do this? First, if you click, it's dimmed here, but at the top left where it says Search, if you click that little search box, it's gonna pop up, it'll give you three options. I think it's People, Jobs and Companies, I wanna say. Click the little silhouette of a person and then click this All Filters button. And it'll pop up this page here. And hopefully you can all see this. But this is basically a list of all the filters that we have for our users to find each other. And so this, again, is like there's one more level of difficulty with the military spouse community, because you can't exactly search for other military spouses unless you just type in the word military spouse in that search bar, which I would recommend. But I'd also recommend you look for veterans of the service that your spouse serves in, because they're gonna be helpful to you as well. So if you know you're moving into a new place, how do you find a veteran? You click this, you see, this highlighted Past Companies box here, Past Company, US Army, is someone who used to be obviously in the US Army. That's pretty straightforward. But you can choose past companies, you can choose schools, you can choose locations and industries. Play around with this tool. And you can really, like in a pretty powerful and very quick way, narrow down again, our 560 million people to maybe into five that you need to speak to. And start with those people, set up informational interviews and sort of work your way from there. You'll also see, any one of you who's even gone, even if you haven't completed a degree, anyone who's done any college work at all, you should be going to look up your school's page on LinkedIn. So, basically, right up, again, at that search bar there, you can see I typed in San Francisco State University here. You'll see the type of page, so that they probably have a couple of different pages. You'll see the one that says school. You wanna click the one that says school. And every single school page has this button that you see highlighted here that says See Alumni. And what does this do? You'll see that the numbers right here, you're looking at 174,144 alums of SFSU who are on LinkedIn. And so what does that mean? What are all these bars below this? This is breakdown of where they live, where they live, where they work, what they do, what they studied, what they're skilled at and how you're connected to them. You can see a little Next button at the top right of that screenshot. If you click through there, you can actually narrow it down, literally, with a matter of five clicks. You could say, okay, I'm a graduate or student at SFSU and I'm not gonna be... Let's just stick with the Joint Base Lewis-McChord example. I wanna see how many of them are in Seattle. And then, from there, if you clicked at one of these little blue bars on the left or really anywhere, all the rest of the bars are gonna change. So if you click Seattle, for example, on the left, under where they live, then where they work and what they do will all adjust to just be a breakout of the ones who live in Seattle. So let's say I wanna find someone who lives in Seattle and works at Amazon and is in talent acquisition, that sort of toggle tool, if you will, will continue to update as you go. So it'll narrow down the numbers for you. And it'll actually present you, once again, if you scroll to the bottom, you'll see the actual list of the profiles of the people who set your criteria. So it's really incredibly powerful to go from... Again, even just right here, for SFSU alums, to go from 174,000 down to probably five people. They're the ones you should reach out to. But once you find someone, for example, so let's say you are stationed up at JBLM, and maybe you're in talent acquisition and you're looking for a gig, I did a search and I found Jen here, right? Jen's a military spouse. You can see that in her headline. And Jen does talent acquisition work at Amazon. I don't know Jen, I just found her on LinkedIn using the tools I just showed you. And this would be a great example of a message that you should send to her: Hey, Jen, I'm a fellow military spouse. I was recently stationed at JBLM right down the road from you. I'm seeking roles in the SeaTac area in talent acquisition. I'd love to learn more about your path to your current role and trends in the local industry. Do you have 30 minutes in the next
few weeks to hop on the phone? So a couple things I'll highlight here. One, right up front, I'm a fellow military spouse and I just moved to near you. You need to make sure immediately you're giving this person a reason why they should care about you. So you're not just sort of a random person that's sending them a message. You're saying, "Hey, I'm like you. I'm interested in following in your footsteps." I'm seeking roles in talent acquisition, I'd love to learn more about your past. You're not asking her for a job. You're not asking her if she knows of any jobs that are available. You're literally just asking her for advice. And more specifically, you're just asking her to talk about herself. And if you can imagine, if you're at a Memorial Day barbecue this weekend, and someone's talking to you about your job and they say, "Oh, that's really interesting. You work at Amazon, what's that like? Was it hard to get a job there? What was that process like? What do you enjoy about it? What are sorta the downfalls of working there?" Of course, that person can answer all those questions. People love to talk about themselves. She'll be very helpful. I can't guarantee if you send her a message on LinkedIn that she'll respond to you. But the way to make sure that you're heightening the likelihood of doing that is what you're doing right up here, you're laying it out for her right off the bat, why she should feel some sense of loyalty to you. Two, you're being respectful of what you're asking from her. You're just looking for advice. And then, three, you're being really respectful about her calendar, too, right? Do you have 30 minutes in the next few weeks? So you're not saying, "Hey, can we talk tomorrow?" or, "Here's a link." Some people send me these things, "Here's a link to my calendar, feel free to pick a time." Just be very polite, be very respectful and be flexible about your time. And saying, "Hey, any time in the next couple weeks. If you actually are already in Seattle or in the JBLM area, I know it's about an hour's drive "up to Seattle." But, you know, offer to go up there and have coffee with her. Offer to come to her office. Maybe offer to just do a phone call. Make it as easy for her as possible to help you. Let's see here. So moving forward, LinkedIn Learning is one of those tools I haven't talked about in the past when it comes to the military spouse community, because this is something that comes with LinkedIn Premier. And so you'll find that as I go through here, I'm hinting at a couple of different things that are on the horizon. LinkedIn Learning is one of those, I think, actually, when I look at the value proposition, for example, of the various things that we have to offer as a company, I think that LinkedIn Learning is probably one of the strongest tools that we can offer to you as a community. Because as I mentioned before, literally, two nights ago when I was on the phone with my buddy. I was talkin' to him and he said his wife was online taking another set of courses to get another certification. And so LinkedIn Learning is a set of 12,000 online business, technical and creative courses. You get this LinkedIn Premium. You go in. I'll show you a couple different features that we have here. But those courses are curated either as individual courses or as learning paths. And learning paths is basically like a curated playlist of courses. You can learn basically any professional skill that you can think of. If you're interested in coding or graphic design or photography or accounting or anything, we've got course in there for that. What you'll see on the right here is a screenshot from the LinkedIn Learning app. So you can actually download these courses, like podcasts. And if you're gonna be on a long flight, or something like that, you can watch a couple courses. Typically, most courses, the average one is about an hour. There's some that are a little bit longer. And then, obviously, the learning pathways are theses curated playlists. And so you'll see here a couple different ways to use LinkedIn Learning. Number one, what you'll see here on the left, if you've got LinkedIn Premium and you're looking at a job description, we'll actually highlight for you what skills you have compared to all the other applicants for the job. We'll highlight for you what skills you have versus what you don't. So the top skills of the folks that are applying for that job, where's your skill gap, if you will? And so you can see here this is actually a job I pulled. I think it's a product manager job from Facebook. Then I pulled from my profile. And so it's showing me, hey, these are the four skills out of the 10 that you have. Well, some of those skills, one, step aside from LinkedIn Learning for a second. Some of those skills are things I probably have. So I probably just forgot to put those on my profile. So I should go back and add those to my profile. So it's a good way to brainstorm what skills you should put. But, two, some of those skills I definitely don't have. Agile methodology is something that I had never heard of before I pulled up this job description. And so what I did, I went over to LinkedIn Learning. And it turns out that there's 10 hours of coursework, eight individual courses strung together that will teach me about how to become an agile project manager. And as I walked through some of those courses, I realized, you know what? Like I've basically done this. This is basically how manage project management in the military. If I
were to apply for this job, I could actually go into that interview and say, "Hey, I've not done a certified agile project." But here's a story of a project that I have done "that was essentially an agile project." And so you wanna make sure that wherever you see a skills gap, LinkedIn Learning is the place to go. Like this should really be the first place you go to sort of see whether we've got courses that will be able to help you advance yourself professionally. We've got, I've pulled a list here that I know flexible work is something that's really optimal choice for military spouses, due to all the other demands on your time. There's a couple LinkedIn Learning pathways for business ownerships. I've spoken with a bunch of military spouses in the past who've started their own business. And so you've got three here on the left that are about business ownership. On the right, I know there's a couple of companies that are out there that are designing remote customer service job pathways for military spouses so that you can be a customer service rep or a customer service manager remotely from your home. So we've got two learning pathways specifically focused on customer service stuff. I don't wanna get ahead of any companies that are gonna be announcing anything in the next few months. But I think there's probably gonna be some opportunities to really make the most of those types of learning pathways. And then get ahead in the on-demand gig economy. There's a ton of really flexible options out there just to make a few bucks here and there. And actually I just saw, for those of you who haven't, Lyft just announced that they're bringing Lyft to military bases. And I think they're starting specifically with the Marine Corps. But I would imagine they're gonna be moving to the rest of the services once they've got their pilot up and running. Just take a look at this learning pathway. And sorta learn about what the options are out there and how to make the most of that. We now just recently have launched a learning pathway just for military spouses. And this is designed primarily around flexible work, freelancing, the notion of informational interviewing. I can't over-emphasize, if you're getting ready for a transition to a new place, you need to be all over it in terms of scheduling those informational interviews to get to know other people. And there's a whole course, an hour-long course, I believe it is, within LinkedIn Learning to teach you sort of how to be really good at informational interviewing. I know the last course in this learning pathway is actually called Leaving Your Job. Obviously, military spouses going through a career, you're gonna be PCS, you're gonna have to pick up and move to a new base. And so there's actually a course in there about how to be most effective at transitioning out of your role so that you're maintaining relationships and you're setting your employer up for success. So hopefully you'll find this to be useful. But if you go into LinkedIn Learning and just type the world military and the choose Learning Path, you'll find that. Moving forward, one of the tools that most, I would imagine, many people have not heard of before that we have is called LinkedIn ProFinder. And so I'll talk a little bit about what this is. But it used to actually be called our freelance marketplace. And I saw a question in the feed earlier that was if you're self-employed, is LinkedIn a good fit for you. Hopefully you'll be paying attention to this section here, 'cause this is the most valuable section for freelancers and for self-employed folks. So what LinkedIn ProFinder is, I should find it in a second here, but this is basically, like I said, it's a freelance marketplace. So there are dozens and dozens of types of basic skills that you can market yourself for. And, really, it's exhaustive. Anything you can imagine from finance and accounting to tax preparation to career coaching. There's like event planning, fitness coaching, almost anything that you can think of, you can essentially join ProFinder as a pro. And the way this works is someone goes in and says, "Hey, I'm looking for a career coach." They put in, they fill out, a handful of questions about sort of what exactly they're looking for. And the pros actually get sort of, the pros that our algorithm finds are most sort of relevant to them, our system alerts them that this sort of request for proposal, if you will, was put out there. And then the pros can all put out basically, not quite bids, but send an introductory email with a link to their portfolio and say, "Hey, I'd love to talk on the phone with you "to discuss your needs more, et cetera." So essentially the user gets the top five proposals and then they get to choose from which of those proposals to go with. How to get there, actually, is just go back to your home page, click that little grid of nine boxes there that says Work. And you'll see ProFinder. That's also how you find LinkedIn Learning, by the way. And pair this with LinkedIn Learning. So in my mind and this is all theoretical, but I would imagine that a really scrappy enterprising military spouse could actually take our tools and go from "I don't know anything about graphic design." to go to LinkedIn Learning and take a learning path about becoming a graphic designer and probably follow, there's probably a whole bunch of independent courses in there that could help you build up your skillset as well. Once you've built that
skillset out, go over to ProFinder and market yourself as a pro and start building up a reputation there. And then once you've got clients, make sure that you're asking them for recommendations on your profile. So here's a good snapshot of military spouse, Michou, who works at LinkedIn, and a couple of recommendations that are on her profile. So once you've got a couple clients within ProFinder, have them recommend you. And then you can actually go and apply for jobs saying, "Hey, I've already got a record of success "that you can see on my profile. "I've already had a couple dozen clients. "And here's an example of my portfolio." So theoretically end-to-end you could start as not being a member of a profession and basically going through and saying, okay, I'm gonna use LinkedIn Learning to teach myself how to do all this. And then go to ProFinder and market your skills, become a trusted and successful pro in ProFinder and then go over and say, all right, I've got experience. Now I'm gonna apply for jobs at big companies to do this work. So obviously, end-to-end, they'll wanna work and you gotta get real scrappy to do it, but theoretically that's one way that you could sorta string all these tools together. I saw questions in the feed about is there a fee related to ProFinder. I'm not an expert on this. I would say I think that being a pro you can sign up for free to do I think it's the first five proposals and then LinkedIn Premium gets you additional access to bidding on other requests for proposals that come in. So it is something that's linked with your premium account. How do you request a recommendation? Just to make sure you're all aware. This is Megan Paone here is one of the spouse leads at the US Chamber of Commerce. Any other person's profile that you go to, you'll always see this little More button here. And when you click that, you'll see this menu on the bottom right. It'll pop up a whole bunch of other choices. So you can actually save someone's profile as a PDF, you can share it with somebody else. You wanna click Request Recommendation. And then you'll see here where it says Megan worked with you but at different companies. There's basically like a dozen different dimensions of how you actually know this person that you can go into to highlight. And then you have to associate it with the job. So you would have to create a job to do the path that I just described. You have to create your job on LinkedIn called, for yourself, within your work experience, called Freelance Graphic Designer, for example. And then you can use that to be the thing that you ask someone to recommend for you, or to add a recommendation for you, excuse me. Last thing here, I know we're coming up on time. And I've got a couple questions in the feed, I believe. Just LinkedIn's blog. So there's a bunch more stuff that I wasn't able to cover today that the SECO team will be able to get into more detail with you on about all the little specifics of choosing a profile picture and using our search functionalities and looking at jobs. But one ongoing resource that you'll always have access to is LinkedIn's blog. So if you go blog.linkedin.com, this is one of those things that to be completely honest, I didn't know this existed before I worked at LinkedIn. I think this is one of those hidden gems that every week we're putting out what we call Tuesday Tips to talk about specific product features you can take the most advantage of. You can see two blog posts here just from the last couple of months about how to stay in touch with your network, how to use the right language when crafting messages and putting language on your profile, et cetera. This is a really, really rich source of information that I personally use to go back to on a regular basis to learn more about what's being launched and what's coming up. So I can't emphasize enough. Please make sure you go to the blog. There's a link you can click on the blog that you can sign up for a weekly newsletter which is basically just gonna be a roll up of all the posts that have come out in the last two weeks. And the next thing, maybe I'll turn it over to Eddy here real quick.

[Eddy]
Well, yeah, Dan, if you look through the chat, this has been an amazing presentation. And so many questions, great peer sharing among the military spouses that are here. As we kept talking about this and you kept kind of alluding to things in the future, one of the things that we're working on right now within the SECO program is to create a specialized counseling session with our career coaches focused on leveraging LinkedIn. So this is something that we've been working on for a couple months to really make our career coaches experts. And Dan and his team there at LinkedIn have been providing us with a great deal of information. But there's this resounding notion of LinkedIn Premium. And, you know, Dan, you and I have been working for a couple months. And what do you think about LinkedIn Premium for military spouses?
[Dan]
Yeah, so this is, I've been in the role for two years. And I've for two years been hearing from military spouses that this is something that would be really beneficial for them. And I truly do believe, and I think, without going into all the nuts and bolts as to how our systems work and everything else, you can see all the way back up at the top when we're talking about joining the group as the way to flag yourself as a military spouse. It has been a challenge for us over the last few years, really, to think through how can we work around that, if you will. And I think that we still have a couple of Is to dot and Ts to cross, but I think we've got some really exciting things to announce coming up in the next few weeks with Eddy and the team. So I would just ask everyone to make sure you're keeping in touch with SECO team and I would say probably in the next month or so we'll probably have a really solid answer to that question that people will be very excited about.

[Eddy]
Yeah, and again, just keep an eye out on the My SECO web page and all of our social media. But we're pretty excited about where we're going, partnering between the DOD and LinkedIn. Just some big things on the very immediate horizon. Now I know there's a couple questions that were out there. One of 'em, Dan, I saw in regards to volunteering. We know that many of our military spouses volunteer a great deal. What's your thoughts on adding volunteer experience to your LinkedIn profile? - [Dan] Yeah, that's a great question. I think absolutely, do it. I think there's a couple of things to think about when you're adding volunteer experience to your profile. One is is this volunteer experience directly contributing to my professional development or leveraging my professional skillset even though I'm not getting paid for it? And I think you really need to make a decision as to where to put it on your profile. So you could put volunteer experience up in your experience section, if it's essentially professional experience. Unpaid professional experience is another way of saying volunteering. And so a lot of military spouses, as I mentioned, when I was in Vilseck, Germany, there wasn't a whole lot to be had in terms of job. And there were military spouses running the family readiness group and doing other volunteer opportunities on post. I would absolutely encourage those folks to put that on their profile, because you're highlighting your skillset and your ability to help an organization and keep its objectives. Whether you were paid for that work or not is I think far less relevant to an employer. Employers are moving much more towards a model where we're hiring based on potential not on specific experience. And so if you can demonstrate, hey I've built out this skillset. For five years I've been the treasurer of this organization or built out a whole new fundraising model, or whatever the case may be. If you're using your professional skills as a volunteer, you absolutely should put those on profile. And really consider actually putting them up in the experience section and not in the volunteer section, because you can articulate that in your summary section, for example. You know, hey, I've been a military spouse and I've been moving from base to base and I've been leveraging my professional skillset everywhere I go, whether it's paid or volunteered.

[Eddy]
That's great. Dan, thank you so much. The amount of information is overwhelming. And literally having been to several of your presentations I do know that you cram two hours of information into 45 minutes. But you did a great job. Again, the comments are great. And keep those comments coming. You can always join us on the SECO Facebook page and post questions there. So if you've got additional questions regarding LinkedIn, if you send those questions to us through the Facebook page for SECO, we'll get those questions answered for you. What a great way to kick off the second day of the Virtual Military Spouse Symposium. We've been talking about branding and networking, and they're so important, all of those aspects of how we promote ourselves as military spouses. If you look at the screen now across the top, you can download Dan's presentation as well as some additional resources, some information about the SECO program, and also provide us with feedback and information through our feedback link, which has been posted a couple times in the chat pod. But you can utilize that. And you can download your Certificate of Participation. We really do need as much feedback as you can give us. I know this has been a resounding
success as far as this session goes. But we wanna bring Dan back and all of his information from time to time. And it's a great way for you to provide feedback on that. We look forward to the next session, which is coming up here, starting in about 13 minutes. And that is part of our entrepreneurship track. And we're gonna talk about financial resources for entrepreneurs. I know in this session, we had a lot of folks that were freelancers and asking questions about, "How can I leverage LinkedIn?" And then we heard about ProFinder and that amazing resource there. So being able to join us at 11 o'clock Eastern to talk about resources, financial resources for entrepreneurs. Thanks, again, for joining us. And, Dan, a huge thank you to joining us this morning. - [Dan] Oh, thank you. Just the last comment I'll say. I added a linked to, someone asked in the chat about connecting with me. I added a link to profile. Please do, 'cause when we do have something to announce, you can bet that I'll be announcing it via my LinkedIn profile as well.

[Eddy]
There you go.

[Dan]
Thank you again.

[Eddy]
I've gotten like 15 LinkedIn requests literally during this session. So keep those connections and continue to build that network, folks. We'll talk to everybody in about 15 minutes.