Hello, everyone. Here we are almost halfway through the second full day of the 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. Welcome to day two of the Fill Your Box trek. It's so important for us as military spouses to have all of our necessary tools in our toolbox. So our next speaker is Keri Hill, one of our amazing SECO Career Coaches. Keri is going to share an overview of the MySECO web portal and the MSEP program. That's the Military Spouse Employment Partnership. And how they can help you reach your educational and career goals. This is gonna be a great session. I know that even though I run the program, from time to time, I'll come across a resource on the MySECO website and think, God, I know I've seen this, but I forgot it was there. I think everybody will be amazed as to how much information and resources and tools we have on the MySECO platform. So with that, Keri, take it away.

All right. Thank you so much for that wonderful introduction and welcome to MySECO and MSEP: Something for Everyone! Webinar. As Mr. Mentzer mentioned, my name is Keri Hill and I am a Career Coach with the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program and I will be presenting today's webinar. Thank you so much for being with us today and happy military spouse appreciation month. We are so grateful for all that you do. As a Career Coach, I really enjoy sharing information with spouses about all the resources available on MySECO. It is amazing how much information there is. I could talk about it all day. However, since we have a short time, I will just be sharing the highlights today. If you have not done so already, please check out the polling question at the top of the presentation. I will give you a few moments to answer. Thanks so much. It looks like we have a lot of folks who've registered on the website. And then also quite a few who have not used it, so that's awesome. So I'll be sharing something new with you today. A couple of you said a few times. And a few of you have used it often, so wonderful. Thank you so much. I appreciate you answering that for me today. During our webinar today, we'll be reviewing the MySECO tools and resources, as well as the MSEP Job Search tool. So what are MySECO and MSEP? The MySECO portal provides you with the comprehensive tools and resources to navigate through your career. You can find the MySECO portal at www.myseco.militaryonesource.mil. The Military Spouse Employment Partnership Job Search tool, also known as MSEP, connects military spouses with over 360 employers who are committed to hiring, retaining and promoting military spouses. You can find MSEP on the MySECO homepage at... Or at, excuse me, myseco.militaryonesource.mil/Portal/MSEP/jobsearch.

I'm gonna start out with talking about the SECO career life cycle stages. And then I'll introduce you to two spouses at different stages in their career. You will see at the top of the page, we have four separate tabs,
Career Exploration, Education, Training and Licensing, Employment Readiness and Career Connections. These are what we call at SECO the SECO career life cycle stages. We each approach our unique journey and pass through stages at different points in our lives and careers. One stage is not better than the other and each is important to our growth. Our goal at SECO is to provide you with appropriate resources when you need them. The first stage is career exploration. If you are unsure of what you want to pursue or have a general idea of what to do, but want to learn more about it, this is a great place to start. This is also a place to learn about career changes or if you’re considering a new job.

The second stage is education, training and licensing. You may or may not know what you want to do and what it will take to pursue your goals. At this point, you may be preparing to attend an education program or are already in an education program. This is a great resource to explore your options and learn what aligns with your particular goal and situation. The third stage is employment readiness. If you have the education and training you need and are preparing to job search, this is where you want to be. Whether you need a resume and cover letter assistance or want to practice interviewing, check out these resources. The last stage is career connections. When you are ready to apply for a job, build your network or locate hiring fairs, this stage is for you.

Now that you have learned about the career life cycle stages, I would like to invite you to respond to another polling question. I will give you a moment to answer. Wonderful. Thanks so much for doing this. Awesome. Right now, so far, we have the most folks are in career connection with about 47% there, 20 even there with career exploration, education and training and licensing with 20 and 22%. Looks like at least about three of you guys are in the employment readiness. Wonderful. Thank you so much for doing that. It looks like at this point, the majority of you are in the career connections life cycle stage. Awesome. We'll definitely be sharing a lot of information with you today about all of these. But definitely career connections, we'll be talking about that closer to the end of the call today.

Now we’re gonna pull up the MySECO website and introduce you to two spouses. First, we have Ashley. Ashley is a 25-year-old recently married army spouse currently living on base at Fort Campbell. She relocated to Kentucky from Texas four months ago. Ashley has been working in customer service for the past six years, but wants a change in her career. She is interested in returning to school for her associate degree. However, she is unsure what field she’d like to pursue. She’s considered the medical field, teaching and photography. Her previous education experience includes taking a few general education courses at her local community college in Texas. Ashley would like assistance with learning more about the different career fields and finding a career that would be a good fit for her personality, interests and the military lifestyle. As you may have guessed, Ashley is in the career exploration life cycle stage. So let's take a look at what resources might be helpful for Ashley. First, I would recommend Ashley consider taking an assessment to help her learn more about what career might match her interests, values and personality preferences. To find the assessments, we would scroll down below Welcome Military Spouses and click on SECO Assessments, if you can click on the button under Advance under SECO Assessments. Here we'll find a list of seven assessments and a description of each one. All the assessments are wonderful and are really great tools to help you decide on a career path. And if Ashley was interested in taking an assessment, she would be scheduled with a Career Coach and the coach would recommend an assessment prior to their meeting that would best fit Ashley's current need. Next, I would take Ashley to the Career Exploration tab. We might start out with clicking on Explore the Labor Market. This section provides great resources for checking out the employment growth and trends in the career field or fields in which she is interested.

Let's start with looking at the Occupational Outlook Handbook, which is a great resource from the U.S. Department of Labor to research different careers. We're just gonna click on the blue Take Me There button and click Ok. It's gonna pull up the website, here. As you can see by looking at this page, there are many ways to research occupations. For example, to the right of the page under Select Occupations By, you can filter by median pay, entry-level education. You can also browse occupations by highest pay or fastest growing projected. In this case, Ashley remarked during a consultation that she was interested in
dental hygiene. So in that case, we're gonna look over to the occupation groups and scroll down until we see healthcare. And click there. This will give us a list of all the different occupations in the healthcare field. We can then click on Dental Hygienist to learn more about the education requirements, licensing, job duties and employment statistics. This can be really helpful when trying to find a career that is both portable and in demand. I'm gonna return back to the MySECO page and explore a little more under the labor market. One of Ashley's priorities is to have a job that is in high demand and is portable. So we will start with looking at the Occupations with the Most Job Openings tool. CareerOneStop Occupations with the Most Job Openings tool allows you to search occupations with the most openings by filtering education level and location. MySECO provides a list of the top 10 occupations with the most openings, filtered by associates degree, in the United States.

Below that, you will see the top five occupations with the most job openings in states with the largest total share of U.S. military personnel. To learn more, please click on the Take Me There button, which will actually take you to the website. We're gonna go back and click on one more resource, here, which is the Fastest Growing U.S. Jobs. And this is also through CareerOneStop. This resource provides information regarding jobs that have the most projected growth. MySECO again will provide the top 10 jobs filtered by associates degree, and the top five in states with the most military personnel in the United States. And then, again you can scroll down to the bottom and it'll take you to that job tool. I'm gonna return to the Career Exploration tab and click on Identify a Career Path. Here, we'll find... Perfect. Now we're just gonna scroll down to an article called, Highly Portable Degrees for Military Spouses. This article provides a list of several portable degrees and what occupations the degrees could lead to, plus other licenses required, and any additional training needed. For example, you can see under bachelor's Degree in education, it could lead to a job as a teacher, a tutor, a trainer; that state license is required for employment; and then an internship or residency is generally also required. I would also recommend Ashley browsing this Career Exploration tab further when she has time. There's a lot of wonderful information on here. For now, we're just gonna click on Education, Training and Licensing, to learn more about licensing, as Ashley expressed interest in several careers that require a license or certification. We would now go to the Professional Development tab and scroll down until we see the State Licensure Directory. We'll click on this one. This is also through CareerOneStop and this licensure directory would allow Ashley to look up state licensure requirements for teachers, dental hygienists or any other career field that may have license requirements. You can click on the Take Me There to go there. Ashley could also explore the Education, Training and Licensing tab further for more information about choosing a school, scholarship information and study tips. We have college exploration, academic testing, study skills, all kinds of great stuff there. And at this point, I would offer Ashley an additional appointment if she would like further assistance with career exploration or assessments. Now that we have helped Ashley with career exploration, we're going to meet Steven.

Steven is a 35-year-old longtime Navy spouse currently living in Norfolk, Virginia. He and his family will be PCSing to San Diego, California in two months. Steven is a registered nurse at the local hospital in Norfolk. He has worked as a nurse for 10 years and would like to continue working in the field once they move to California. He has been on the same job for five years and is a little nervous about the process of finding a job. Steven would really like some help searching for jobs. As you may have guessed, Steven is in the career connections life cycle stage. Although he is in the career connections stage, we will also take a look at a few resources under Employment Readiness, as he expresses some anxiety about the job search. To start out, I would recommend that Steven complete the individual career plan under, Our interactive tools help you reach your education and career goals. This is a handy tool to help you reach your career goals. Many of you who have used the My Career Advancement Account Scholarship in the past may be familiar with creating your MyICP as part of the process. One of the really cool parts about the MyICP tool is that you can create multiple ICPs and you can even create one for assisting you with employment preparation. Once you've answered the questions, it will provide you with a number of steps and resources that can be very helpful. And after discussing the ICP with Steven, we'll take a look at the Employment Readiness tab. We would first click on Develop and Enhance Skills and Readiness. Since Steven has been employed for
several years, he may need a refresher in preparing for online job searches and interviews. Under Preparing for an Interview... Taking a moment, there. Information, here. Suggestions, including common interview questions and general interview tips. If we click the back button and just go down a little further from this one, we also have a wonderful Interviewing Skills Module that will also give some additional tips and further suggestions for preparation for an interview. There are a lot of great items under the Develop and Enhance Skills and Readiness to help Steven prepare for applying. But for the sake of time, we're going to move on to one other resource under the Employment Readiness tab, which is called the Resume Toolkit. We click on the Resume Toolkit here. Steven may have an updated resume, but just in case, I would suggest browsing the samples here on the right. He can also click on the Write Your Resume to brush up on keywords, writing an introduction letter and tailoring his resume. Lastly, we're gonna click on the tab for Career Connections to help Steven find a job. It can be very daunting looking for a new job when you have been employed in the same location for a while. So we're going to look at some helpful tools to make it less so. I would suggest that Steven become familiar with both the Find a Job and the Resources tabs, as there's a lot of great information about networking, hiring fairs, LinkedIn, and a variety of associations that may be able to provide support and assistance to Steven in his new home. However, the main tool we will use based on Steven's needs is the MSEP job search tool. I've mentioned previously MSEP stands for Military Spouse Employment Partnership. It can be found on the homepage or the Find a Job tab. Just gonna scroll down. Find it, here. Down here near the bottom. There we go. On the tab, we'll be able... The tab will give Steven some tips for his job search, plus how to use MSEP. We're just gonna click on the Search jobs tab here to get to the MSEP tool. Now we'll see on the left that you'll see... I'm just gonna tell Steven a little bit about the page in general and we'll explore it a little bit. And so, on the left, you'll see where it says Hot Jobs. These jobs are those that employers wish to fill immediately. Hot jobs are posted for five days before expiring. We're gonna click on the View All tab. See all the hot jobs. Wonderful. As you can see, there are about 46 right now. We can go through. I see a couple medical ones. There's a registered nurse, labor and delivery nurse, here. Because Steven will be moving a little further in the future, this might not be the best option right now. But it may ease his anxiety to see that there a lot of job opportunities in the medical field. All right. Now we're gonna look at the featured partners here at the bottom of the page. MSEP features approximately 15 partners, which changes periodically. This list provides you with a little information about each partner. We can see whether they offer telework opportunities, which is symbolized by this little yellow house, here. That's the telework symbol. You can also see how many jobs they have posted. Here under Military Cost Cutters, we have one job posted. Under Xerox, there's over 2199. You can also see when they became partners. So in this case, with Cost Cutters, 2018. 2018, 2006. And you can also click on the photo there of the... The profile, excuse me. And kind of take a look and learn more about each partner. Now we're gonna just click on the View All Partners. I'd like to ease Steven's anxiety a little further by showing him how many partners are available in the healthcare industry. We're gonna start out under Industry and just put in health. And click in Healthcare Support. You can see there are about 25 there in healthcare support. And then we're gonna put in Health Practitioners and Technical. As you can see, there are about 59 total partners that are in the healthcare field or that offer positions. This can potentially give Steven a lot of options to choose from. Now we're gonna return to the MSEP Job Search and actually do a job search here with Steven. As you can see, there are over 300,000 active jobs at the moment. So that's a lot of jobs to look through. We're just gonna put in registered nurse here under the keyword. And then in location, he's going to San Diego, so we're just gonna put that in. And so we're gonna refine the search a little bit because Steven did mention in his consultation that he would be comfortable with commuting up to 20 miles. So we're just gonna increase the radius a little bit. We can also click on Industry to put in healthcare or health practitioners and technical, if we wanted to. You can narrow it by partner. So if there's a certain partner he would like to work for, he can take a look here. He can also click View All Partners and check out the partner and look to see it that way, if he wanted. You can also choose job type by choosing full time, part time, temporary. Anything like that, as well. But today, we're just gonna do the radius and the title and the location. We're just gonna click on the search button, here, and just give it a few moments to pull up our job opportunities. Just gonna take a few moments. Thanks so much for your patience. Taking just a few more moments. Thanks so much. Wonderful. There we are. So it looks like we have 29 different positions open right now. It
looks like a lot of them were posted today. Quite a few with Kaiser earlier. Lot of different kinds of nursing options. You can see oncology, float pool. All kinds of different things they could do. Critical care. All kinds of different things here. It will take... As you can see, there are a lot of job options for Steven. If Steven would like to learn more about a job and a company, he can click on the posting here. And it will give you some more information. When he's ready, he can click on it and apply through the website. He can also allow MSEP partners to see his resume by uploading his resume on the site. He can also learn more about the partner by clicking here, as well, as we did earlier when we were looking at the featured partners. You can also do it here, too, and just learn more about that. And at this point, I would offer Steven another appointment if he'd like to learn more or if he would like assistance with his resume or preparing for interviews. We do offer interview preparation with mock interviews and also live mock interviews that are done via video chat. So there are a lot of different options that we could offer him through coaching packages and through this website. Now we're gonna just return to our PowerPoint presentation. As you can see after meeting Ashley and Steven, MySECO can provide you with a wealth of information at every stage in your career. MySECO was created with you, the military spouse, in mind. If you'd like more information, please call SECO to speak with an advisor or schedule an appointment with a Career Coach. We are here for you. Thank you so much for taking the time to be with us today. I really enjoyed talking with you and hope this provided you with some information. Now we're just gonna open up this time for some questions.

[Eddy]
Kelly, thanks so much for that. Definitely want to answer all of your questions, so we've got Kelly online to be able to answer your questions. So please enter those into the Chat pod. Looks like we've got several people typing in information there. Can't say enough. One of the keys to the MySECO website from my perspective is that we always have to do new things that are innovative. We've got to stay ahead of the curve. It's a site that's always developing. And we're always putting new features in. Kelly talked a little bit about the candidate search, where recruiters can search through military spouse profiles and through their resumes. That's an amazing step forward. And the fact that we have military spouses that have literally been hired by our Military Spouse Employment Partnership partners and that spouse has never applied for the job. The recruiter has reached out to the spouse, said, "You have the skill set we're looking for. "Are you interested?" That's a gigantic step for our spouse community. Features like adding chat to the website so that you can talk with a career advisor and get help browsing the website and all the resources, set up appointments with our Career Coaches. Those are all new things that we've added just in the last few months. And we're always looking for ways to be innovative. And that's part of the feedback from you as military spouses, to let us know what's needed. How can we make these tools and resources more useful for you? Now I see we've got a couple questions in there. So Kelly, I'll be quiet and let you take a couple of those.

[Keri]
All right. Thank you so much. I appreciate it. And thank you so much for that. That's awesome. We have one question about creating an account to explore all these resources. You can definitely create an account, if you'd like. You don't have to for some of them. For the MSEP, for Resume Builder, for creating an Individual Career Plan, you do need an account for those kind of interactive tools. But as far as just getting onto the site, you can get onto that without logging in. But if you'd like to, you can go up and create a DS Logon. You can go up to the top of the page. There's a point where you can log in and you can actually create your own, if you'd like.

[Eddy]
And DS Logons can sometimes be a challenge to create. You've got to have a very long password and it's really because this site stores so much PII. So it is a DoD system. But a lot of requirements there. If you
have a challenge creating that login, if you look at the very top of the MySECO webpage, there's a How Do I? button. If you click on the How Do I? button, the very first topic under How Do I? is Create a DS Logon. So we've got resources right there to help you do that. Couple other questions that have come in in regards to, share the credentials of the coaches and the ongoing training they receive. I'll talk a little bit about the credentials, but then I'll have Keri talk a little bit about the training. All of our Career Coaches are master's level. They hold a master's degree. And they're certified counselors. So different areas that they're certified in. Just as important as that educational and professional background, many of our Career Coaches and Career Advisors are actually military spouses, themselves. So not only do they have that background, but they've lived this and they understand the challenges there. But Kelly, why don't you talk a little bit about some of the training that you guys undergo?

[Keri]
Oh, absolutely. We undergo training pretty much all the time. So we're always doing training. We have to do... As certified coaches, we have to do continuing education units. We do also in-house trainings, where we learn about everything from federal resumes to networking, LinkedIn, all kinds of things. So we're always doing training, always learning new things to help our military spouses. Because we want to provide you with the most up-to-date information that we can. We're always, always learning all the time.

[Eddy]
Great. And I have to apologize, Keri, for calling you Kelly, like, 15 times. My brain is all meshed into one long webinar at this point. Another question up there. Here's one, Kelly. This one could be interesting. Are there frequent openings at MySECO if you are interested in career coaching yourself?

[Keri]
That is a wonderful question. There are some options on that you can definitely check out. We're on the MSEP website, as well. There are definitely some options. So, yeah, just give us a call and we're happy. There are always opportunities.

[Eddy]
So the company name is Zeiders Enterprises and they are a Military Spouse Employment Partnership. Not only do they employ our Career Coaches and various other aspects of the SECO Program, they're also an extremely friendly military spouse company. Many of their employees work remotely from across the U.S. and even around the world. They're an amazing partner that provide all of these services for us.

[Keri]
Yes, absolutely. It's wonderful. We all really enjoy working for them. They're wonderful.

[Eddy]
Keri, we have a kind of a statement, talking about how great the site is and how many resources there are. And a comment regarding challenges faced by foreign-born spouses. Anything to talk about resources that we have in place for foreign-born spouses?

[Keri]
That is a great question because that is a challenge. And there are some really great resources on... If you do an ICP... If you log in and do an ICP, they have some good resources for that. They talk about how to...
Some of the process for that. I've seen a lot of good information on the ICP for that. So we do have some resources for that, as well. We also recommend sometimes giving Military OneSource a call, as well. They can provide some really good assistance with that, too.

[Eddy]
That's right. Military OneSource provides free document translation, so if you have transcripts or work experience that you would need to have translated into English, Military OneSource can do that. For non-complex documents, they can usually turn those around in three to five days. Sometimes the more complex documents take a little bit more time. In addition, if you're a foreign-born spouse and English may not be your strongest suit, Military OneSource provides free online translation. Literally, like, as you're talking to one of our Military OneSource consultants, they are able to tap into a resource that can literally live translate for spouses or service members in up to 150 languages. So just another great resource there. Do military spouses that aren't on their servicemember's orders due to being married after they were PCSed still qualify for these services? And that is a resounding yes, you do. We don't check orders. As long as you have the ID card, that's the key, and your endears, then you are eligible for these services. And I should mention that these services are eligible for active duty, National Guard and reserve spouses. So please spread that word out and let other spouses know that these resources are here for you to utilize.

[Keri]
Yes, absolutely.

[Eddy]
And another note on eligibility, have to do with spouses whose servicemember has separated or retired. As a military spouse with a separated or retired servicemember, you are eligible to utilize these services up to 180 days post-separation. We're working right now with the administration and some other federal agencies to extend that to 365 days post-separation, so keep your eye on the MySECO website. And that's going to apply to Military OneSource, as well. So we're excited about where that's gonna go in the future. And as soon as we have all of those I's dotted and T's crossed to make that happen, we'll have a big announcement and continue to try to support our retirees and separated families up until what we're legally able to do. I saw a question there from Arnette and I'm not sure I understand the question. But it says, "Does Military OneSource "help with degree accreditation, too?" Two suggestions for you. Getting ready to wrap this up in her in a little while, but if you want to articulate that a little more or give one of our Career Coaches a call. You'll be able to get a person on the other side of the line one-on-one and they'll be able to help you out with that specific... Ah, I see what... If your degree is from a different country. Definitely a challenge there. And what we would be able to do or what Military OneSource would be able to do would be able to translate all of the information that would be included in your degree, like your coursework, any of those... Abstracts of courses, all of that. They would be able to translate that, but they are not able to help with the actual accreditation of that degree.

Another question in there regarding veterans and retired separated military spouses. Our goal is always to point you in the right direction. So if there's a challenge that you are experiencing as a veteran or a military spouse and you are reaching out to Military OneSource or the SECO Program, there are gonna be some things that legally we are not able to provide you with. But we always look for an opportunity to point you towards a resource that may be able to help. In those lanes, I always tell folks, give us a call. If there's a challenge that Military OneSource may be the right people to call, give them a call because they are gonna be able to point you to the resource. And that's the same with the SECO Program. Give us a call, let us see where you are and what you need, and we'll see if we can point you to that resource. We are going to start to wrap this session up. Keri, I really do appreciate all of the great information that you pushed out there for us. Lot going on. Again, keep an eye on the website. You heard earlier today, if you were with us in the
LinkedIn session, that we're looking at a pretty major announcement coming up next month or so regarding LinkedIn and military spouses. Some really great opportunities there. But again, we're always changing things and we're always adding things to the MySECO website, so continue to come and check us out every now and then. You'll be surprised at how often we add new resources. Engage with our Career Coaches. I often say that that should be your first stop. You can connect with somebody like Keri, who does an amazing job, is just a wealth of information. And they're gonna be able to point you in the right direction. A lot of times, it's quicker to give us a call than it is to try to find the information on your own. I would say most times it is. It takes a good deal of Google-fu and time to be able to find things online. But when you've got a Career Coach that is in your back pocket, that you can tap into whenever you need them, go ahead and use them. That's what they're there for.

[Keri]
Absolutely. And thank you so much for everyone who participated today and thank you so much, Eddy, for introducing us and helping with the questions and answering these wonderful questions. We really appreciate it.

[Eddy]
You bet. And there's another question that came in there with Ivy. And I know that Ivy's getting ready to PCS to Texas here sometime this summer. But a great deal of information out there as far as federal employment. We're gonna have a session later in the seminar on federal employment. But it's also so many resources out there to assist. You may have seen the last, what, two weeks ago? The administration signed a new executive order regarding federal employment for military spouses. And our office was able to have some input on that executive order. And what we really focused in on was the accountability of federal agencies to report not only how many military spouses they hire, but how many military spouses applied for jobs, how many were interviewed and ultimately how many were hired. So the administration is very keyed in on this issue. They're very excited to move forward to look for more federal opportunities for military spouses and again, hold those different federal agencies accountable. We're also looking at working with federal agencies to impact that noncompetitive hiring authority we have to get them to utilize that more. So there's more out there, Ivy, on that. More coming. But we can definitely assist you as you get ready to PCS and move to a new installation, looking for those federal opportunities that might be out there. As always, we have the information from this webinar... All of Keri's talking points and her slides are on the download pod. You can download that, as well as additional information on the SECO Program. We always want your feedback and I know that Minina has been posting our feedback link in the Chat pod, here. You can download your certificate for participation. If you're having any challenges with those downloads, please feel free to give us your email address and we'll make sure that we email that information to you.

Looking about 19 minutes from the next session. And this is gonna be a great session provided by the team in the DoD that handles all of financial readiness for military families. We're gonna focus in on planning and making choices to reach your retirement goals. All of us at some point want to retire, some of us sooner than others. But you know, what can you do as a military spouse to ensure that your family is going to reach those goals? There's a lot of decisions to be made right now, especially for our younger families around the Blended Retirement System. And making some choices about which direction you should go. But also there's some bigger picture items on how you can start to do better in regards to saving and planning for retirement and setting yourself up for success and setting your family up for success. So join us at one o'clock Eastern for that seminar. And thanks again, Keri, for all that information!

[Keri]
Thank you so much.