Hi everyone, Eddy Mentzer here. I'm happy to be kicking off the last session of the Day Two of the Virtual Military Spouse Symposium. We're headed into our sixth straight hour of information and our 13th hour overall. We've discussed a lot today, from leveraging LinkedIn as a military spouse to creating a plan to retire someday. Our next speaker is Ms. Kristina Santos, a career coach with the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program, the host for this week’s Spouse Symposium. Kristina is going to share insights on how to connect with resources to help you stay motivated, beat that job search burnout, and achieve success. Welcome Kristina.

Thank you, Eddy. Happy Military Spouse Appreciation Month to all of you and thank you for joining me today as we explore tips to jump-start your job search. I am also a military spouse and I want to first acknowledge your sacrifice and to say that it is an honor to be part of this Military family. Thank you for answering the poll question as you are entering into the webinar today. We wanted to know which part of the job search process is the most challenging for you, whether it's finding the time, knowing where to look, preparing your documents, or understanding how to network. And it looks like a majority of you joining today find knowing where to look and preparing your documents as the most challenging part. And our goal today is to give you tools to strengthen your job search strategies in each of these areas. The mobile Military life puts additional strains on the job search process. Whether it is feeling like we have to begin networking all over again, trying to find our resume and other job search related documentation in the middle of unpacking our new home, or deciding where to start, job searching, especially, for us as military spouses, is a marathon, not a sprint. And your job search is only as strong as your actions and your mindset. So today, we are going to focus on four tips for jump-starting your job search. The first tip will highlight how to prepare and plan your job search including gathering and editing your necessary documents. We will then navigate through resources available to military spouses using the MySECO portal to explore the online job search process and the power of making connections and networking. We will finish with providing you with strategies for helping you take action now and we will be ready to answer your questions at the end. Tip number one is to prepare and plan. Remember, we said the job search process is a marathon, not a sprint. So to prepare for this race, we need to define our goal, assess our interests, skills, and values, and prepare the necessary documents as well as develop a plan of action. And as with every race, you always want to keep your eye on the destination. So before you begin, you want to focus on the clarity of your career goals. What is the exact job you want? This also comes with knowing your interests, skills, and values, and how these relate to the world of work. We have a picture here of the homepage of the MySECO portal where we can select the
first Career Lifecycle Stage: Career Exploration. From here, we can find an entire section of MySECO dedicated to self-exploration and resources to help you identify your career path and plan your route. For example, by selecting Self-Exploration, we can find a multitude of career and personality assessments available to military spouses like some of the ones listed here: the O-Net Interest Profiler, Myers-Briggs, CareerScope, and the Strong Interest Explorer. This allows you to understand your interests, skills, and values, and how those relate to different occupations. It is the future that conditions us, not the past. So what you commit to become tomorrow using your career goals will ultimately inspire your actions today. Before you begin your job search, you also want to prepare all of your necessary documents. This includes your resume, cover letter, references, portfolio, and transcripts. The MySECO portal holds resources to assist you with this preparation under the Employment Readiness Career Lifecycle Stage. After selecting Employment Readiness, we are able to select the resume toolkit. The MySECO Resume Toolkit gives us access to articles and resources for writing and submitting your resume. The MySECO Resume Builder Tool, as well as the section that you can see sample resumes which include sample resumes, cover letters, and job announcements for a variety of occupations that you can download. SECO career coaches are also available to assist military spouses with this preparation with preparing this documentation. We would love to review and help you tailor your resume and cover letter to get the job you want. And the final part of tip number one for prepare and plan is to develop a plan of action. It can be hard to figure out where finding a job fits into our mobile Military life. Many of you have heard the phrase finding a job is a full time job and it is true in so many ways. Finding a job takes time and it takes hard work. Try to break down the job search process into manageable tasks. Set goals for how many applications you want to complete per week, or how much time each day or week you want to spend on your job hunt. If you aren't getting the results you want, are you able to carve out more time or re-evaluate where you are spending your time? This includes time spent working on your resume, cover letter, networking, writing follow-ups, and enhancing your personal brand through social media and professional development. Develop your own tracking system to help you reflect on where you have applied, when and where the job description can be found if you need to follow-up, or, better yet, if you receive a call for an interview. Consistency and commitment are key when developing your plan. It will be your actions, not your thoughts that truly drive your success. You are the CEO of your job search, and SECO is here to work for you. And finding employment is all about finding the right job, so we are now going to bring up another poll question about your job search. It states: My preferred method for searching for a job includes: using online job search portals, talking to friends, walking into an organization and asking if they are hiring, going directly to an organization’s website, looking in the newspaper, or other. And if you could please take a moment to select your answer, and then we'll go over the results. Wow, and it looks like many of you joining us today use online job search portals as well as the organization’s website to find jobs. And so, we are going to continue on with tip number two, which is: find a job online using the MySECO Portal. We will be covering a few specific resources that we can access from the MySECO Portal in more depth, including USAJOBS Employment Portal, CareerOneStop job search features, and connections to different job banks, including state job banks, Veterans and government job banks, and private sector job banks. We will finish up by showing you how to find a job right from the MySECO Portal using the MSEP Job Search function. We are now going to go live to the MySECO Portal. You will notice on the top right-hand side of your screen, you will see four arrows where you will be able to see and view the website as a full screen, and this might help you see the information easier if you would like to select that. From the home page, we can see the Career Connections Career Lifecycle stage. This allows us to find an entire section of MySECO dedicated to job search and networking resources for military spouses. We will first select the Find A Job dedicated to job search and networking resources. From here, we can find the direct link to Federal Employment Opportunities through USAJOBS Employment Portal. This is the official website for civil service jobs with the Federal government. By selecting Take Me There, we are able to leave MySECO and go directly to USAJOBS.gov. From the USAJOBS homepage, we can search based on key words such as job title, department, agency, series, or occupation, and, or, by location, the city, state, zip code or country, or even the name of a specific military installation. From the homepage of USAJOBS, we are able to create a USAJOBS profile, learn more about the Federal hiring process, and explore opportunities. By selecting Explore Opportunities, we are able to explore the Federal government's more urgent hiring needs and
connect to high-demand positions that you may be qualified for and can apply right away. For example, by selecting Mathematical Statistics, we are automatically directed to 18 different jobs that you can explore related to this field. By selecting the Federal Application Process, we are given an overview of the Federal hiring process from creating a USAJOBS profile, searching for jobs, and submitting your application to the interview, candidate selection, and job offer. And by selecting Create A USAJOBS Profile, you can create your profile or sign in if you already have an account to apply for jobs in the Federal government. Your profile also allows you to save your favorite jobs and searches, upload your resumes and documents, and to make your resume searchable. At the bottom of the page, we’re also able to connect with different events through USAJOBS and Explore Hiring Paths. Explore Hiring Paths allows us to explore if we may be eligible to receive preference when applying to certain jobs. For example, by selecting Military Spouses, we can learn more about military spouse preference, which is available for relocating military spouses.

MySECO also has an article regarding military spouse preference and we also have a Federal employment career coaching package available to military spouses interested in applying for jobs within the Federal government. SECO packages allow military spouses to meet with a SECO career coach on an ongoing basis to focus on your unique career goals and journey and to dive a little deeper into the process of applying for a Federal position and we still have one more day of the Virtual Military Spouse Symposium. If you are interested in Federal employment, be sure to check out the session tomorrow, May 24th at 3:00 PM Eastern Time as one of our SECO career coaches presents tips to ease the stress of the Federal application process. Another useful tool on the MySECO Portal is the CareerOneStop website, which is sponsored by the US Department of Labor. By going back to the Find A Job section, we are able to select Career Planning and Job Searches. By selecting Take Me There, we are able to go to the home page of the CareerOneStop website to connect to assessments, career tools, and job search databases. As we can see from the homepage, there are many different resources available through this website. For today, we are going to select Job Search. We are then able to scroll down to the Find A Job section to type in a job title and/or keyword as well as a location. We are going to type in dental assistant to search for dental assistant positions in Killeen, Texas, which is near the Fort Hood Military installation. You will notice that the location auto populates for you to select, and then by selecting Search, we can pull up a list of available job postings. We can see here that we are also able to filter by source, and this can enhance your job search experience. Here, we are also able to select USJOBS, America’s Job Exchange, CareerBuilder, and Indeed. If you find a potential listing that sounds like a good fit, you can click on the job title, and it will link you directly to the job posting for us to review. Once you have the job posting open, be sure to review the overview and qualifications for education, training, and experience requirements, as well as a job and possibly a company description. This can be useful information to ensure you meet the minimum qualifications before you spend your precious time applying. Job postings can also help you with adding key words to your resume, and preparing for an interview. And now that we are connected to the CareerOneStop website, how many of you know how to find your state job bank website? If you could please select the Hands Up icon if you have ever visited, or heard of, your state job bank before. And I'm seeing a few hands coming up, so that's great, some of you have already connected to your state job bank before. Every state, if you're not familiar, has its own state job bank, which is a job search website hosted by your state. This can be helpful if you're preparing to PCS to a new location, or if you just want to add to your job search toolbox. By selecting Job Search, we are able to select State Job Banks underneath the Find Jobs section. This will allow us to connect directly to the state job banks of all 50 states and United States territories. If you use your state job bank on a regular basis, it will give you an option to create an account on your state job bank website. At the bottom of this list of state job banks, we are also able to connect to veterans and government job banks, including the National Health Service Corps Job Center, Veterans Re-Employment, and USAJOBS, as well as private sector job banks including America's Job Exchange, CareerBuilder.com, EmploymentGuide.com, Flipdog, USJOBS, Jobs.com, Monster.com, Federal Government Jobs, and Indeed. Each of these resources can enhance your online job search experience and even uncover different results. You may also find one or two that you prefer based on how the job bank is set up, or the specific industry or job you are searching for that may work best for you. And by navigating back to the homepage of the MySECO Portal, we are also able to search for jobs without ever leaving MySECO by selecting MSEP Job Search. MSEP stands for the Military Spouse Employment Partnership. I
know some of you have been attending multiple sessions, so you probably have heard of this before, if you have heard of or connected to the MSEP Job Search, please select the Hands Up icon if you're familiar with this tool. And I'm seeing quite a few hands come up, so that's great that you have connected to this before. This, the Military Spouse Employment Partnership has established partners with over 370 companies who are passionate about hiring, recruiting, retaining and promoting military spouses. We can see today there are currently over 311,000 active jobs for military spouses that are posted here. Utilizing the MSEP Job Search function on the MySECO Portal allows you to search for jobs using job titles or key words, location, or additional refined search options by industry, partner, job type, or a refined location. We are also able to connect directly to Hot Jobs on the left-hand side of the page. These are jobs that display five days before the job posting expires and need an immediate fill. By selecting View All Partners on the right-hand side of the page, we are able to connect to an alphabetical list of all 374 current MSEP partners. If you are signed in to your MySECO account, you can find a few partners that you are interested in working for, and you can even save the partner profile to your dashboard by selecting the Bookmark icon. You can also opt-in to the MSEP candidate search. By selecting a specific partner to view the partner profile, we can find a company overview, links to the partner website on the left-hand side of the page, and a list of current job postings that are posted in the MySECO Portal. We recommend checking MSEP on a regular basis and also connecting directly to the company's website in case there are job postings listed that are not yet displayed on the MySECO Portal. And if you see a job posting here that you would like to apply for, you must be signed in in order to select Apply Now. How many of you joining today may be interested in telework opportunities? Please select the Hands Up icon if that sounds like something that would be a good fit for you. And I am not surprised, I see a lot of hands coming up and working from home does allow you to may allow you to take your job with you when you relocate, or you can expand your career possibilities even when you live in a location where opportunities in your field might be limited. As we go back to the View All Partners list, we are also able to select the check box for Offers Telework Opportunities. And as this loads, it will actually display a list of the MSEP partners that have acknowledged that they may hire for Telework positions. You can also use different phrases in your job search such as: remote worker, work from home, telework, or telecommute, to find additional work from home positions. And so from the View All Partners list, I'll just show you real quick, you can check off this box for Offers Telework Opportunities and find this list of partners that have acknowledged that they offer work from home positions. And please note, this is not a list of companies that have a current position for telework, please use the MSEP filter or go directly to the company's website to confirm a telework listing. And even with all of these online job search resources, job searching can feel very isolating. You need a job now, and even if you have a job and you're looking, it is frustrating because there are so many ups and downs. It can feel like a long and exhausting process, and being a military spouse can make building those relationships and connections extra challenging, because you may be in a place where you haven't been able to get out into the community. The MySECO Portal provides resources to help military spouses connect to your community both locally and virtually. After all, studies have shown approximately 80% of positions are not published and are filled through networking. Therefore, the online job search alone only connects us to about 20% of jobs that are actually available, and that is why tip number three is to make connections and network through MSEP events, hiring fairs, and resources available at your local military installation. From the MySECO Portal, we are able to connect directly to the MSEP Events Calendar, which connects you to information on upcoming social media discussions with MSEP partners and SECO career coaches through Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as upcoming webinars. Here's a quick snapshot of some of our upcoming events in June, including the Ask the Expert Chats and MSEP Partner Connects. Hiring fairs offer instant connections with employers and industry representatives. Hiring Our Heroes is an organization that moves around the world to bring job fairs for hiring military spouses, veterans, and even service members. Often, their events include resume workshops and networking events before the actual hiring fair. And you can connect to a map of their upcoming events where you can register directly online from their website. Hire Our Heroes USA provides free expert career coaching and job sourcing for more than a thousand transitioning US Military members, veterans, and military spouses each week. And the Military Spouse Corporate Career Network is a partner of the Spouse Ambassador Network and connects military spouses to online training, virtual job fairs, and job opportunities. Remember when you're
attending a hiring fair, or preparing to attend, to focus on the quality versus quantity. It's not about how many business cards you can collect, it's about who is attending, and who is the right fit for you. Take the time to research the companies, their mission, values, and their vacant positions and take notes before and after the event to help you feel confident when following up with your newfound connections. The Military Installations Tool allows you to connect to employment assistance on your local military installation. Military and family support centers may offer career coaching and workshops to explore career planning, effective resume writing, interviewing techniques, and additional job search strategy. And the final tip for jumpstarting your job search is something you can do every single day and something that each of you is doing at this very moment by attending this webinar. Tip number four is to take action now. How does what you do every day impact your job search? Are you getting better and closer to your goal? Or going further and further away? One place to start is in building your personal brand. Get to know your core principles, values, and passions. If you feel you need to develop your personal brand, think about professional development resources or volunteer opportunities that can help you build your skills and values, focus your energy and develop a network. Professional development tools and volunteer opportunities can be found using the MySECO Portal. Also, how are you using social media to market your personal brand? Using resources such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter increases your exposure to a high volume of professional connections that can help point you in the right direction towards your next job. You can connect to company profiles, join LinkedIn groups with similar interests and backgrounds. Can you edit your online image to ensure it is current and targets the right skillsets? When referring to your online image, you always want to strive for perfection. In addition to self-improvement, tune into your surrounding environment. Is it cultivating growth? Can you connect to associations or organizations within your community, or go on an informational interview to learn more about a company's culture, mission, values, and jobs to see if they match your own? And remember, the SECO program is here to help. We offer one on one career coaching consultation where you can meet with a career coach to discuss your unique education, experience, and career goals. We also offer career coaching packages where we can meet with you on an ongoing basis and focus on areas such as Federal Employment, a career in healthcare, intelligence and cybersecurity, teaching, STEM, and entrepreneurship. We also have packages tailored to PCS moves, being a brand new military spouse, and reentering the workforce. Please give us a call today to schedule a consultation. Getting the job you want is the ultimate goal of the job search process, but many people do report feeling burned out and hopeless from their job search experience. Try to focus your mindset instead on the opportunity to grow, evolve, and build relationships throughout the journey. By taking action today, staying positive and open to possibilities, you might discover opportunities you never knew existed or make a connection that will be the key to your future success. And again, remember, you are here. Never underestimate what it means to take that very first step towards your goals. Together today, we examined four tips for jump-starting your job search, including how to prepare and plan your job search, and how to find a job online using the MySECO Portal. We also discussed the power of making connections and networking, and steps that you can take today to take action now. Remember, you are just one yes away from everything changing. We are now going to open the floor to take your questions. Please feel free to type questions into the General Chat pod.

[Edy]
Kristina, that was absolutely awesome, so much information there, and I know you can see some of the questions and comments that have been popping up in the chat pod. For those of you that are on and listening to this, Kristina’s another amazing example of our career coaches and all of the wealth of information that they can provide. She’s also a military spouse herself, so she lives this and breathes this on a daily basis. But as far as questions go, let’s go ahead and see if we’ve got some questions for Kristina in the chat pod. Kristina, just as folks are typing things in, you know, if you had two takeaways from this session, the short and sweet, those little key notes, what would they be?
[Kristina]
I think two takeaways: one is that it's really never too early to start thinking about it whether you have a PCS move coming up in six months, or a couple weeks, even if you have a job currently, you always want to stay up to date on networking and what is available, what kind of jobs are out there, and what you might be interested in as your next steps. So by networking, continuing to network and research the labor market and keeping your resume up to date, your LinkedIn profile up to date, you will always be ready if a PCS move were to come or if you are, all of a sudden in the middle of your job hunt, you'll be ready to go and hit the ground running. So I think staying prepared, and then also, the job search process is just that, it is a process. And I know there are a lot of ups and downs, but with any process, when you come by the time you come to the end and you get the job, you're gonna look back and see all the ways that you've changed and grown through that process. So I think if you can keep it in mind to try to stay positive, and to work hard, and to do your best every single day, and try to figure out something that you can do every day, that will help you move towards your goals, not any further away. That is also something that I could take away from that, would just be to stay prepared. It's never too early to start and to really focus on your career goals, and stay positive through the process.

[Eddy]
I think that's great advice and you know, we heard earlier today from LinkedIn, Dan Savage at LinkedIn and some of the ways to build that network. When I look back at my career and literally, back since I was like, 15, 27 jobs, or job titles, and I would say 24 of those came from my network. And so, you know, it's job search is also about letting people know that you're in the market for a job, because you never know what will materialize and it comes down again to utilizing all those tools in your toolbox, whether it's the Military Spouse Employment Partnership, which is, of course, where we hope that you're looking for opportunities, but that's just one tool. Kristina, you know, you talked about the other job search engines that are out there, all the different tools. Besides the Military Spouse Employment Partnership, what do you think the biggest opportunity or the biggest tool that folks should be looking at would be?

[Kristina]
Gosh, a lot of it depends on personal preference, whether it is what you find the most comfortable using in your job search or possibly your industry. Indeed is very popular, USAJOBS for Federal employment, a lot of times your career goal will drive which job search resource you use the most. And a lot of times it's also maybe using more than one. For example, if you apply for a job through Indeed, you may still want to connect to the company through LinkedIn, you may want to connect to the company as many ways as you can, that they can get connected to you, can see your name, and sometimes, they may have a certain number of applications that come in from Indeed, or from another job search database, but then they may also have a certain number that they take from their company website. So that can also help you when you are trying to become maybe one out of 10 instead of one out of 100 to try to connect with the company as many ways as you can.

[Eddy]
That's great advice, Kristina. I saw a question up here from Laura. This, Kristina, I'm not even gonna try to answer it, even though I could, I'm gonna let you do it. But Laura said "I've had several interviews "but have not been able to land the job. "Is there any opportunity to see where I may be going wrong? "Do you offer any workshops?" well, how 'bout mock interviews, Kristina?

[Kristina]
Wow, that is a great question and our career coaches, we are designed to talk to you about what you've done so far. That's actually, usually, one of our first questions when we're talking to you about your job
search is what have you done so far, and where have you found success, or what kind of feedback are you getting from employers? So if you are having several interviews, we may want to focus on the questions you've been asked or how have those interviews been going? And as Eddy mentioned, we actually offer video mock interviews where you can meet with our SECO career coach and go through a mock interview together and get some coaching tips on ways that we might be able to improve or practice some of those difficult questions.

[Eddy]
I think it's the mock interviews are one of my favorite things we do, and frankly, it's probably one of the most underutilized resources that spouses take advantage of, but when you're doing a mock interview, it's so much more important than just Googling the top five questions asked in an interview, and our career coaches are awesome at doing it. They're gonna take a look at the job you applied for, the company you applied for, they're gonna look at the resume you submitted, and they're gonna ask you questions, you know, based on that. So they may ask you a question about, you know, why have you had seven jobs in the last nine years in four different countries? Well, that's typical of a military spouse's resume and we're gonna be able to help you to answer that question because it is a hard question. That's, I think, one of the best things about our Military Spouse Employment Partnership employers is that they understand that already. They know what it means to be a military spouse and they know the skillsets that we develop because of those challenges as military spouses. But I would say, if you're ever getting ready for an interview, doing the mock interviews with one of our career coaches is a great tool utilizing I talked earlier about, we're always changing and adding, and adapting the MySECO website. We've just in the last six to eight weeks, added in the capability to do mock interviews via video, and that just provides another level of service to our military spouses because it really allows for that career coach to see you and to look at some of those, you know, facial expressions, or your body language, and provide you even that next level of information. So it's just a great resource, so I would encourage you to take advantage of that. And we see another question up there, and I think this is a great point. So there were questions about resumes and stuff and Stephanie's there, and Jessica Norville have responded in regards to the services that are located on the installations, and I think that's a great point. Each of the almost every installation around the world has a family support center. If you're in the Air Force or with the Air Force, it's the Airmen and Family Readiness Center, it's Army Community Services in the Army, Navy Fleet and Family Readiness, Family Readiness in the Navy Family Readiness Programs in the Marine Corps, they have employment readiness specialists that are right there, and they provide excellent face to face support in all of these areas. Whether it's looking for, you know, local employment opportunities, or tweaking that resume, getting that cover letter ready to go, they provide awesome support for that face to face. The SECO program is really about augmenting what is already done on the installations through a virtual program. So, of course, all of our work is virtual, but we support those installations and it's a great point, and thanks Jessica and Stephanie for bringing that up. So it looks like that is starting to wrap up the questions and comments, we had great turnout for this seminar, especially later in the day. Kristina, thank you so much for joining us, appreciate your enthusiasm and the information that you were able to disseminate. Again, folks like Kristina those are our career coaches, they do an amazing job. Again, frankly, they're a very underutilized resource. Why would you not want one of them in your back pocket? And you know, last year, about a year and a half ago, we started to work on this concept of assigning a military spouse with their own career coach so that you have a consistent level of continuity when it comes to who you're working with. And we've done that, the results of that and the feedback from spouses are tremendous, so you'll never know if they could help you if you don't try 'em. So give us a call at Military One Source or connect with us online on the MySECO website via chat and get your own military spouse career coach. They're a great resource. As always, if you look across the top, we've got some resources including the slides that Kristina talked to today. You can provide us feedback and I know we've had the links in the chat pod as well for our feedback questionnaire as well as a certificate of participation. If you provide us with your e-mail, we'll make sure that we get the downloads to you. All of these sessions for the entire week are going to be recorded on the MySECO website. It takes us a few days to get those up there and get 'em ready for publishing, but you'll
have access to all of these resources, the slides, and the sessions themselves. So great information to be able to pass on to fellow spouses. Join me in about, I dunno, 20 minutes or so on Facebook live for a wrap-up of what we've talked about today as well as what we're going to see tomorrow and just a great way to share information across Facebook. Join us tomorrow on the 24th, 10:00 Eastern, we're gonna kick it off, letting your resume tell your story. And you know, so many opportunities to build a strong resume, to work on those cover letters. We're gonna hear from one of our expert career coaches and how you can develop your resume, give you some real hands-on tools and tips on developing a strong resume that's gonna tell your story and land you that next job. So I hope to see everybody at 4:00 on Facebook live and tomorrow at 10:00 Eastern for Let Your Resume Tell Your Story. Have a great night.