

## GUEST COLUMNIST

### Mission Media Takes Veteran Hiring to New Level

By Pamela Williams

With more than one million service members leaving the military over the next five years, and unemployment rates among post-9/11 veterans exceeding those of the population at large, there is an on-going public movement to rally support for putting those who have served into civilian careers. In 2013, our industry hosted a Hiring Our Heroes job fair at The Cable Show in Washington, D.C. At the conclusion of the job fair, it became apparent that there was a collective desire among companies in the cable industry to take a systematic, industry-level approach to hire and retain veterans, reservists and National Guard members. As a result, the Veterans Advisory Council was born.

The Veterans Advisory Council, chaired by Michael Powell, president and CEO of the NCTA, is comprised of veterans employed in the industry, HR executives and industry leaders who are all connected by their great commitment to this initiative.

Over the last two years, the group has met regularly to formulate a thoughtful plan of action. The culmination of their efforts is the launch of Mission Media, a multi-faceted initiative to further the cable industry's efforts to encourage recent military veterans, reservists and members of the National Guard to join cable's ranks.

"We need collective impact. Every one of our companies has done great things for veterans. That's not an issue. The issue is how can we combine efforts in a common, cohesive form that will have a bigger impact than any would have individually? Mission Media is an effort led by our human resources leaders to develop best practices that can be used industry-wide," shared Michael Powell.

The elements of Mission Media will cover all aspects of

veteran recruitment and retention including: developing best practices for industry companies centering on the most effective ways to identify and recruit and retain veteran talent; training sessions for human resources managers in cable who are unfamiliar with recruiting and retaining veterans; virtual job fairs; an industry-wide mentoring program and a "fellows" program, both of which will serve to develop and retain talent; and partnerships with veteran-related nonprofits and government agencies. Mission Media will also serve as an umbrella brand for unifying the industry's veterans hiring activities.

We kicked off the launch of Mission Media on September 30 in New York City during Diversity Week with a historic signing of the Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's (ESGR) Statement of Support.

Neil Smit, president and CEO of Comcast Cable, Nancy Dubuc, president and CEO of A+E Networks, and Michael Powell signed the document on behalf of our entire industry. Members of the NCTA's board of directors and the Veterans Advisory Council were in attendance to witness this momentous event.

As an industry, we have set the bar high in terms of what we plan to accomplish with Mission Media, and the Cable and Telecommunications Human Resources Association (CTHRA) is proud to guide this initiative. In the months ahead, members of the council and I will be calling upon companies to become active participants in Mission Media. It's my sincere hope that you will join us to support this truly significant initiative that will enrich our industry's talent pool with those who have served our country.

For more about what's in the pipeline for Mission Media and a chat with Veteran's Industry Council member William Baas of Comcast NBCU, check out Cablefax.com.

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