

## Q1 2016 Newsletter

On behalf of myself, John Phillips, Shreve Gould and Matt Grob, I'd like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a Happy New Year and to review our efforts in 2015 and our 2016 schedule. For the legacy members who attended the Q1 Summit at Turner on January 27<sup>th</sup>, you've witnessed our tremendous growth first hand. For those of you who attended your first summit, welcome to VETLANTA. For those of you who haven't attended a summit yet, I urge you to come out and assist with making Atlanta the #1 destination for veterans.

The event at Turner was our largest summit yet as we had 260 participants representing 150+ organizations from industry, non-profits, academia, government and transitioning & active service members. Our special guest included Tuere Butler from Congressmen Lewis office, State Representative David Clark and Brigadier General Joe Jarrad, Georgia National Guard. Thank you again to Turner for hosting the event; they did a phenomenal job.

One of our goals going into 2015 was to establish a social media presence. We now have a LinkedIn Group which has grown to 600+ participants. In November, Jason Tison, owner of TEESINEED (veteran owned small business that is permitted to sell VETLANTA service mark merchandise) developed the VETLANTA Facebook page. In December, John Phillips asked his Boots to Loafers web designer/administrator, Cathy Ross who runs Canopy Web Design LLC (also a Veteran owned business, [www.canopywebdesign.com](http://www.canopywebdesign.com)) to design, create, and rollout [www.VETLANTA.org](http://www.VETLANTA.org). Cathy is doing all the design work pro bono and helps in the administration side of running the website. John donated the funds to maintain the website for the first year.

VETLANTA had a very active 2015. We started with a summit at Coca-Cola which Sergeant Major of the Army Ray Chandler was our special guest. From there we moved onto the first American Corporate Partners Event of the year in which Coca-Cola became part of the ACP family joining UPS, Home Depot, AT&T and GE as a participating company in Atlanta. ACP is a national non-profit that offers corporate mentors to transiting veterans for a full year. In addition to the mentorship program, sponsor companies can host local events such as networking events, resume review sessions and employer panel discussions.

JWT hosted our second summit where we reviewed non-profits the good, the bad and the ugly and welcomed the stage to 20 non-profits to present. UPS and Bryan Wolfe hosted our first annual Veterans Owned business summit in August where we provided contacts and advice to several dozen VOB owners on how to be a supplier to our perspective companies. A day later we held our biggest summit of 2015 which was hosted by McKesson. Our key note speaker for that Summit was Brian Stann, CEO for Hire Heroes USA, Marine veteran, Silver Star Winner, Retired MMA Fighter and UFC announcer.

In September a dozen VETLANTA members had the opportunity to attend the Emory Veteran Connect dinner where we helped Emory veterans broaden their networks. UPS hosted the second ACP event in September where assisted 50 plus transitioning veterans. We had our fourth quarter summit at Georgia Power/Southern Company which gave us momentum going into Veterans Day. We started Veterans Day "month" with an amazing event at AT&T. AT&T, led by Michael Doyle organized an event to not only assist but also to honor homeless veterans in Atlanta. This event highlighted the true collaboration spirit of VETLANTA as we were able to bring together 35 companies, non-profits and government agencies to assist 120 veterans. The next week, Coca Cola hosted the first ever joint ACP - Hire Heroes joint event. We had two dozen transitioning veterans attend the Hire Heroes transition seminar and about a hundred transitioning veterans attend the ACP panel discussion. The last event was a small but prime example of the collaboration VETLANTA offers. UPS supplied the volunteers, Home Depot supplied the materials, Soldiers Angels helped identify the project and coordination with the VA and we successfully completed a small shelving project at a VA facility in the area.

This brings us to our schedule in 2016. We have a full slate of events planned however we are going to need your help. As you look at the schedule you will see several events where we need project managers and host organizations. Please consider volunteering to host or as a project manager and if interested please let the executive committee members know at the earliest. We will have four VETLANTA summits again this year. We are currently finalizing the host for Q2, UPS will host Q3 and Southern Company Q4. On the transitioning veteran side of the house, we plan on hosting three ACP/HHUSA events this year which will be hosted by UPS, Coca-Cola and GE.

One thing that we are very proud of is our idea to develop and implement Military 101 training. This training will be focused on educating HR, recruiters and hiring managers on veteran candidates. We see two extremes in veteran hiring. The first is some of our veterans simply fail to translate their skills and experience effectively into a resume. The good news is there are a number of non-profits and government organizations in VETLANTA that are assisting on this issue. The second extreme is at times, industry just doesn't get it. Some companies fail to give their employees the training to recognize what veterans bring to the table and many in the hiring chain simply don't have the ability to appropriately translate veteran resumes. Our goal is to change the mindset that companies need to hire veterans because it's the right thing to do and make them realize they need to hire veterans because it gives them a competitive advantage. Our plan is to have one showcase event this year hosted by an organization with all of VETLANTA invited. We also plan to field this at our individual companies. Our target for the showcase event is April/May. In addition to needing a host company the project manager Jordan Kellett needs some assistance developing the curriculum.

One of our goals this year is to assist the homeless population. AT&T is considering hosting a second event to assist however we'd like to get a company to support AT&T or take the lead as required. We'd also like to work with the VA to participate in this year's stand down and this event can be combined or held separately depending on how the host company wants to support.

Bryan Wolf has taken the lead to form the VETLANTA Entrepreneurship Center for Excellence. They plan on hosting several events this year and you can contact Bryan directly if you want to assist. We've had a consistent request to hold networking events between our summits so our members can get together. Think of it as summit without the death by PowerPoint. We are looking for ideas and hosts for future socials. Finally we'd like to get involved with assisting with service related activities. We understand that there are over 100 non-profits in VETLANTA and understand many of them want to be involved. We've formed a group headed by Shreve Gould and Matt Grob to review, vet and select several activities.

Thank you for participating and we look forward to a great year. With VETLANTA leading the way, Atlanta will be the #1 destination for veterans.



## **2016 Projected Activities**

### **VETLANTA Summits (4)**

Q1 – Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, Hosted by Turner

Q2 – April, Host TBD

Q3 – August Hosted by UPS

Q4 – October, Hosted by GA Power/Southern Company

### **American Corporate Partners/HHUSA Events**

April – UPS (Lloyd Knight, Project MNGR)

TBD – Coke (Patrick Haddock, Project MNGR)

TBD – GE (Project MNGR, TBD)

### **Military 101 Training**

To be fielded in Spring 2016

Jordan Kellett (Project MNGR)

Looking for volunteers to assist with curriculum development and for host organizations. Plan is to have one company host one showcase event open to all and then several smaller internal company events

### **MISC Events**

Homeless Veterans Event – Host Org/MNGR Needed

Emory Veterans Connect Dinner

VA Stand Down – Project MNGR Needed

Veteran Owned Business Summit (Bryan Wolfe, Project MNGR)

UPS VBRG Social, Jan 28<sup>th</sup>, (Kevin Horgan, Project MNGR)

Looking for ideas/Project MNGRs/hosts for socials

Service Related Events – Looking for ideas/Project MNGRS