



FALLS

Lower Bucks chamber hosts veterans employment workshop



Valdon Daniel, a general manager for Sam's Club in Longhorne, conducts a mock interview at the Lower Bucks Chamber of Commerce building in Fairless Hills on Wednesday afternoon. As a 25-year army veteran, Daniel understands many of the issues that face veterans upon entering the civilian workforce.

By ANTHONY DIMATTIA Staff writer Anthony DiMattia: 215-949-4205; email: adimattia@calkins.com; Twitter: @dailydimattia | Updated 4 hours ago

The Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce is doing its part to help veterans.

Representatives of the chamber teamed with about a dozen businesses Wednesday in Falls to offer an employment workshop for veterans. The event offered tips for interviews and resumes as well as a tutorials on job networking websites.

“The chamber is a business support organization so we promote economic development and we think this is a talent pool that should be tapped into,” said Dan Bates, chamber president.

The workshop was designed to teach returning or unemployed veterans interview skills that they may not have learned while in the military, organizers said.

“I think it’s unfortunate because they’re two different languages spoken ... the world is about networking and connections and that is not something veterans are really taught,” Bates said. “They also have great teamwork mindset and that is good in corporate American but you also have to learn how to talk about yourself.”

The goal is to help lower the unemployment rates for veterans, organizers said. Last year, the unemployment rate of veterans in Pennsylvania was 7.7 percent while the unemployment rate for non veterans in the state was 7.1 percent, according to U.S Department of Labor.

“Everybody wants to help vets, they sincerely want to help vets, but they just don’t know how,” said Mark Boada, public relations specialists for Collision Max.

The event was also formed to help businesses learn about veterans, organizers said.

“Veterans typically don’t take individual credit for things,” Boada said. “They tend to take team credit and play down their own role, which we all love but not in a job interview. So we want both the interviewers and the veterans to know that.”

Bates said he become motivated to help veterans after working with Air Force members during a team leader tour in Florida some years ago and after serving on Congressmen Mike Fitzpatrick’s veterans advisory council.

“I just thought we as a chamber could do more (for veterans),” he said. “My interest became, how do we use the resources we have, the connections we have.”

Paul Taylor, of Bristol, was one of a handful of veterans that attended that event.

“I observed a few things that I wasn’t familiar with, and we went over a few things that were helpful,” he said. “I’ve been at the same job for so many years and haven’t been looking for employment.”

Organizers said they plan to host similar events every three months for any veteran that wants to work in Bucks County.

“If you’re within driving distance you’re good,” Boada said.

For more information visit www.lbccc.org.

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