

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

March 2021

SUCCESS STORY: Jorge Chirinos

"Mom, I know I made you cry when I was injured, but today I am going to make you smile: I got a job!"

This is the message that U.S. Marine Corps veteran and PVA member Jorge Chirinos had for his mom when he started working again following his injury.



Jorge, a member of PVA's Southeastern Chapter, contacted PVA Veterans Career Program in May 2020 through the PVA website. He had just earned his Associate's Degree in Information Technology and was ready to begin a new career.

PVA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Genia Hachenberg and Jorge started working on his resume and Genia guided him to a short-term, work from home customer service position where he could gain valuable experience. From there, they looked at other positions where Jorge could move forward in his career. A central tenet of our work with clients is ensuring that veterans are engaging in a position where they can gain experience in a comfortable but challenging environment. They tried a few different positions but none were a great fit or in the IT field that Jorge was most interested in pursuing.

Genia and Jorge continued to network with Veterans Career Program employment partners to find the right fit for the next step in his career. Jorge also enrolled in an online Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) through IVMF's Onward to Opportunity program and received his certificate in February 2021.

In early March, Genia learned that Cognosante had an opening for a bi-lingual quality analyst supporting a federal contract with their subsidiary company, J.Lodge. The position was part-time and work from home, a great fit for Jorge. Genia reached out to Chris Valdez, Cognasante's Veteran Recruiting Liaison, and introduced him to Jorge.

Genia continues to be in touch with Jorge to assist with any necessary job accommodations and assist him in managing the impact of employment on other benefits, such as Social Security Disability. He is an SSDI Ticket holder and understands those protections, but he is enthusiastic about his career and anticipates building a strong financial future.

"I want to thank the Veterans Career Program for the help and dedication during this process. My family is very proud and I'm golden!"

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

22 Client Placements

- 17 Paid Employment
- 5 Training/Education



2 PVA Members

19 Veterans

3 Family Members

59 Total Placements through March

State of Veterans Employment: Focus on Veterans with Disabilities

According to the [latest U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) release on the employment situation of veterans, the jobless rate for all veterans increased to 6.5% in 2020. The unemployment rate for veterans with a disability rating of 60% or higher is 9.6%, well above the unemployment rate for general veterans with a service-connected disability, which is 6.2%. Additionally, it's important to note that DOL BLS reports that 44% of veterans with a service-connected disability are rated at 60% or higher. None of these numbers take into consideration the employment situation of veterans with non-service-connected disabilities.

PVA's Veterans Career Program is hyper-focused on ensuring that we are engaging and supporting veterans with disabilities, their family members, and caregivers. One great resource is [Veterans Career Live](#) virtual sessions, which are highly interactive sessions on a variety of relevant topics from understanding the ADA and your rights, to working through interview anxiety and other relevant topics.

The challenges of transitioning from the military with a disability and some helpful tips are highlighted in two recent articles published in partnership with Task and Purpose:

- [The Transition You Never Asked for: Finding Meaning After Losing Your Military Career to Disability](#)
- [4 Things to Know Before Entering the Civilian Workforce after Disability Retirement](#)



Powered By:

