

Education Fairs and Resources— What’s in it for you?

By **Irvin Varkonyi** | ivarkonyi@apus.edu

Marketing Manager, Adjunct Professor, Transportation and Logistics,
American Military University/American Public University
Chair, NDTA Professional Development Subcommittee

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understanding **WHAT** to look for.
- Becoming familiar with **WHO** attends.
- Identifying **WHERE** to find your resources.
- Determining **WHY** there are benefits.
- Planning **WHEN** the time is right.
- Opening the possibilities of **HOW** to get it done.
- Learn of **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE** for military spouses.

The Department of Defense (DOD) values the education and professional development of all personnel—active duty and civilian—during their employment and even after they move on to other assignments or retirement. The DOD services and support agencies, such as the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), hold Education Fairs that introduce various programs and opportunities.

WHAT ARE EDUCATION FAIRS?

Education Fairs are organized events that give attendees the chance to explore a variety of educational and training resources and learning venues. Often, these fairs are presented by formal or informal educational consortia, who work with training coordinators.

WHO ATTENDS EDUCATION FAIRS?

Supply and demand come together at Education Fairs. Representatives (recruiters, faculty, staff, and students) of learning institutions are the “Supply;” they share helpful information with service members, their dependants, and government employees—the “Demand”—who are seeking career advancement and broader horizons. Institutions include:

- Traditional brick and mortar, accredited, degree granting institutions
- Online accredited degree granting institutions

- Hybrid institutions that combine traditional and online learning
- Training institutes focused on certificate programs
- Organizations focused on industry certification

WHERE DO YOU GET INFORMATION ABOUT EDUCATION FAIRS?

Check with your local training office, and visit the DLA Training Center (DTC) web site, which shares a tremendous amount of information about programs available to you. The DTC provides a wealth of services for DLA personnel as well as those who work in organizations that are co-located with DLA.

The mission of DTC is to ensure that the DLA workforce receives the necessary skills and knowledge required to support attainment of the Agency’s strategic goals and objectives. Additionally, DTC can provide a wide range of services to the Federal community (see www.hr.dla.mil/dtc/about.html). Publications include DLA Today, Extending the Enterprise; DLA Supply Management Overview; and Mentoring Matters Handbook. DTC is based in Ohio with representatives in Michigan, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. DTC instructors serve a global workforce by providing on-site training throughout the US, Europe, and the Middle East. DTC has won numerous awards for innovative course design and delivery. For more information, call 1-800-458-7903.

WHY YOU SHOULD GO TO EDUCATION FAIRS?

There are many options to obtain information about education and professional development: word of mouth, the Internet, direct mail solicitation, advertising in magazines or radio/TV, pop up ads as you surf the web, etc. By taking a couple of hours of your time at an Education Fair, however, you will be able to talk one-to-one with recruiters who will help you match your needs with institution capabilities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHEN SHOULD YOU GO?

Pre-planning is important before you go to an Education Fair. Your time will be limited, so you’ll want to visit those institutions in which you have specific interests, if possible. Get advance information on which schools will have representatives at a fair and check them out before you go.

HOW DO YOU GET THIS DONE?

Develop a checklist that can include:

1. What is the value of an Associates of Arts degree for me? A Bachelors of Arts? A Master of Arts?
2. What is the value of a certificate in transportation? Or acquisition? Or other?
3. Should I enroll in a logistics degree to formalize my “On the Job” training?
4. To reach senior positions, will I do better with a degree in business administration?
5. If my degrees were earned some time back, would I be better with professional certification such as APICS’ Certified Supply Chain Professional or SOLE’s Certified Professional Logistician?
6. Do I have time to attend in person classes?
7. Will travel for my job suggest that online classes will offer more flexibility?
8. Is it better to attend classes where fellow students come from a variety of backgrounds, or ones in which students will have similar professional experiences?

INTRODUCING: THE MILITARY SPOUSE CAREER ADVANCEMENT ACCOUNT

All active duty military should be aware of the “Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (CAA) project, with a maximum of \$6000 available to applicants. The CAA registers universities who wish to participate, along with military spouses. A full list of eligible facilities and providers is available. If you have questions or need assistance regarding MyCAA participation or Financial Assistance invoicing processes, please contact the MyCAA School Liaison at MyCAASchools@MOSCenter.us.

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Bookshelf Ideas

Dr. Kent N. Gourdin

The Things They Carried

The Things They Carried, by Tim O'Brien, published by the Broadway Books, 1998, 246pp, paperback, \$14.95.

This book appealed primarily to my “national defense” side as opposed to my “transportation” side. Some of you may have already read it when it was originally published in 1990. This is a literary work chronicling the experiences of a fictional infantry company in Vietnam. There are 35 laudatory reviews presented at the front of the novel, but to quote from the book itself: “They carried malaria tab-

lets, love letters, 28-pound mine detectors, dope, illustrated Bibles, each other. And if they made it home alive, they carried unrelenting images of a nightmarish war that history is only beginning to absorb. Since its first publication, [the book] has become an unparalleled Vietnam testament, a classic work of American literature, and a profound study of men at war that illuminates the capacity, and the limits, of the human heart and soul.” Veterans of all ages will find this a moving and rewarding read, but perhaps none more so than those of us who served during the “Vietnam Era.” *DTJ*

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Sign up TODAY to become a MyCAA partner school, agency, or organization by visiting DOD’s AI Portal (<https://aiportal.acc.af.mil/aiportal/Register.aspx>). Identify and register a “user” from your billing department in this virtual online payment system. Enter the information for your “user” and choose your organization in “Lookup School.”

Ask your academic advisors and financial assistance counselors to coach military spouses in selecting a “career goal” and choosing classes or programs from your school or organization to meet that goal. These classes or programs are then documented by each military spouse in his/her “Career Plan” available in the “Career” section of the spouse’s MyCAA account. Information about MyCAA, including contacts for technical assistance and MyCAA Career/Education Consultants, is available at <https://www.military-onesource.com/>. Follow the link near the bottom of the page to Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts. *DTJ*