

Joe Wallis, Senior Program Manager, Military Recruiting and Outreach, Microsoft Corporation

Senator Murray, Committee Panel members, and distinguished guest, on behalf of the Microsoft Corporation and Microsoft's Military Community, I thank you very much for this opportunity to discuss this most important topic focusing on Veterans in our region and how to assist them in transitioning to civilian life and employment. Microsoft, as one of the largest employers in the Puget Sound region recognizes its commitment to positively engage our local community and understands that the veterans in our region face challenges in transitioning to civilian employment.

Recognizing the need to assist transitioning military persons in overcoming these challenges, Microsoft's internal Military Community and senior leaders in the company came together to establish a program to specifically target military veterans for employment at Microsoft as well as assisting these veterans in their successful transition regardless if they became employed at Microsoft or not.

The program took on the tagline "We Still Serve" and that phrase has reflected our commitment at Microsoft to continue to serve our veterans. The formalized We Still Serve program was established in our recruiting organization to identify opportunities for employing veterans at Microsoft.

Our veteran focused website at, www.WeStillServe.com, has several functions that assist transitioning military persons in engaging with open positions at Microsoft. The website has a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) decoder that allows a military person to enter their specialty code and then view current open positions at Microsoft that might best fit their unique experiences and skills. Candidates can link directly to positions at Microsoft that require security clearances. We also have a "Chat Room" available on Fridays, where transitioning military persons can chat with veterans at Microsoft and learn about how best to engage our recruiting process or to discuss issues around interviewing or translating your military skills to a civilian position. The website also links veterans to our Microsoft Talent Network that sets them up for updates on when positions open that match their skills. Our extensive social media presence also updates candidates on news in regards to careers at Microsoft.

Our recruiting program also attends numerous military focused career events locally and across the country to engage military candidates and assist them in their transition. These events are great venues for bringing together transitioning veterans and a large number of corporations and organizations interested in their success. We have partnered at these events with organizations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, the local Seattle area non-profit organization Hire America's Heroes as well as the transition centers at all the Puget Sound area military bases and other bases across the nation.

Microsoft also has reached out to the transitioning military community with our "Elevate America Veterans" initiative. Microsoft launched this program to help our country's veterans and their spouses acquire the skills and resources that they need to be successful in today's workplace. Through this initiative, Microsoft is convening a coalition of public, private, and nonprofit organizations that are interested in contributing expertise, cash, and in-kind resources

to help U.S. veterans and their spouses build the skills and access the resources that they need to be successful in today's workforce. Through Microsoft's investments of more than \$12 million in cash, software and related support, veterans and their eligible spouses can take advantage of resources including: technology skills training and certification, job placement, career counseling and other support services such as childcare, transportation and housing to help in their successful transition to civilian life. Microsoft recently extended this program with a voucher initiative. Microsoft, with assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor in a liaison role, and local workforce areas, is proud to offer U.S. military veterans and their eligible spouses, vouchers for no-cost IT skills training and certification designed to help them build the technology skills employers are looking for.

Microsoft recognizes the fact that these efforts in assisting military persons transition to successful civilian careers is a goal that takes dedicated programs by corporations and organizations nationwide working together to deliver expertise, support, and most of all an opportunity for successful careers to those who have served our nation honorably. Thank you.