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VETERANS GRADUATE FROM TEAMSTERS MILITARY JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

CDL Instruction Helps Veterans Transition to Civilian Careers in Transportation

Last month, Teamsters Joint Council 25 Trustee Michael L. Yauger and other union representatives ceremoniously recognized the graduates of a program that helps active military personnel transition to a career in transportation. The ceremony was held at the Army's installation in Fort Riley, Kansas.

The innovative six-week program is the result of a partnership between the Teamsters Military Assistance Program, the U.S. Army, Fort Sill, ABF Freight, Soldier for Life, the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. The program provides Commercial Driver's License (CDL) instruction behind the wheel and in a traditional classroom setting. Trainings will be repeated for new classes throughout the year.

"We are proud to be able to assist with training the brave men and women who defend and protect our country for a career after they leave the military," said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "Our congratulations go to the first graduates of the training at Fort Riley."

Yauger, President of Teamsters Local 786 and the National Director of the Teamsters Military Assistance Program, said the Fort Riley training is the result of the success seen at Fort Sill, the site of the first group of graduates in January.

"I am gratified that we continue to assist in finding employment and career opportunities for those who have honorably served through the Teamsters Military Assistance Program. As a former soldier myself, I understand the pitfalls that all who have worn the uniform face upon their transition into the civilian sector. This unique military assistance program is a way for America to capitalize on the experience and professionalism of today's all-volunteer military at no cost to the tax payers or to those who have honorably served," Yauger said.

Col. Adam Rocke, Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff of the Army and Director, Soldier for Life Program commented, "I am extremely proud of the five cohorts who have graduated from the TMAP/ABF Freight programs at Fort Sill and Fort Riley. These men and women are entering a workforce as trained professionals, bringing with them the invaluable skills the military teaches and those honed through this unique program. Employment is just one of many factors of transition, and a meaningful career often leads to pursuing education and health opportunities--the foundation for an enduring Soldier for Life mindset and a Veteran who will continue to serve as a leader in his or her community, family and work."

An estimated one million soldiers will leave the Army over the next decade. Veterans bring knowledge and skills back from their service, and many military members already possess the foundation for successful careers in transportation.

Once the CDL is earned by a participant, the union and ABF Freight provide job placement assistance within the nationwide ABF Freight network. Other transportation providers are expected to join the program in the future. With more than 130,000 soldiers transitioning from military service to civilian life annually, this program will help meet a critical need.