

Posted to Newsroom on 11/12/2014
Updated on 11/24/2014 11:29 AM

CareFirst Honors Associate Vets, Enhances Veteran Outreach

By [Steve Schuster](#), Associate Communications

Many CareFirst associates who served in the U.S. military gathered in Canton, CASCI and UCP on Tuesday morning to participate in CareFirst's Veterans Day ceremonies that recognized their sacrifices and gave them the opportunity to talk about their days in the Armed Forces.

Associates also learned more about the company's [new Military/Veteran Associate Resource Group](#), led by Julie Fisher, Vice President of Service Operations in the Small & Medium Group SBU. Fisher shared the group's proposed mission statement and later accompanied some associates who traveled to Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery in Baltimore County to pay their respect to those soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The Veterans Day ceremony in Canton featured keynote speaker Lt. Col. Brian Borakove, a commanding officer, First Battalion in the 175th infantry of the Maryland Army National Guard. His speech was webcasted to associates in UCP and CASCI.

"CareFirst recognizes the experience and potential that our veteran community brings with them to work every day," said Gene Pulket, a veteran and Human Resources Client Consultant who organizes CareFirst's Veterans Day ceremonies each year.

Pulket also described ways CareFirst is working to recruit more veterans to join the company. Of a workforce of about 5,000 associates, about 100 have identified themselves as U.S. military veterans.

CareFirst has adapted some hiring practices and job descriptions to make them more "veteran friendly," he said. For example, instead of requiring three years of experience for some jobs, Human Resources has added "or equivalent military experience" to some of those job postings.

Those words make a world of difference, Pulket said. "Our staffing team has really stepped up," he said.

The company also recently launched the Military/Veterans Associate Resource Group. Aside from enhancing community outreach efforts and job descriptions and recruiting more veterans, Fisher, a U.S. Army veteran, said the group is open to new ideas and welcomes more volunteers.

After the gathering in Canton on Veterans Day, about a dozen CareFirst associates traveled to Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery for an hour-long program with a 21-gun salute and presentation of the colors. Wreaths were also presented by widows of the fallen veterans.

Slideshow:

[Photos of CareFirst's Veterans Day 2014 events](#)



Be Counted for Your Service

CareFirst is asking all associates who are protected veterans to identify themselves in the company's new PeopleSoft self-service application by Dec. 14. [Click here for directions](#). Any elections made prior to March 23, 2014, must be updated in PeopleSoft.

A Mission in Mind

During CareFirst's Veterans Day event, Julie Fisher revealed the new Military/Veteran Associate Resource Group's proposed mission below:

Further the CareFirst mission by promoting the values, integrity, personal accountability, diversity vision and leadership model that is integral to all CareFirst associates both at work and in our communities.

To provide a supportive pathway to mentor our current and future CareFirst Veteran/Military population.

To provide an opportunity to offer counsel, assistance, outreach and education to military and veteran populations.

To strengthen the bond between CareFirst associates and our military/veteran community.



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