

From: March, Joseph H.
To: Public Relations Division
Sent: 8/2/2010 3:02:06 PM
Subject: VOTES NEEDED: The American Legion's Job Fairs for Veterans Competes for \$250K Pepsi Refresh Everything Grant

Attachments:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Legion's Job Fairs for Veterans Competes for \$250K Pepsi Refresh Everything Grant

Votes Needed!

INDIANAPOLIS (August 2, 2010) - The American Legion is demonstrating its commitment to helping military veterans find jobs by entering its career fairs in this month's Pepsi Refresh Everything Project. If the effort is successful, The American Legion will be awarded a \$250,000 grant to sponsor events across the country in which employers are paired with veterans looking for work.

"The unemployment rate among Iraq and Afghanistan veterans exceeds 14 percent. This is a national disgrace!" said American Legion Nation Commander Clarence E. Hill. "Every veteran vowed to defend America and protect our way of life. The least we can do is to allow them an opportunity to support their families and contribute to America's workforce. Hiring veterans isn't just the right thing to do, but it is smart business! These talented men and women offer unique skills, discipline and a proven work ethic that would benefit any employer smart enough to hire them. Additionally, job fairs sponsored by The American Legion include Small Business Development Workshops so veterans can pursue the American dream."

The Legion job fairs are among more than 1,200 charities that are competing for a grant. Pepsi will award \$250,000 each to the two charities that receive the most votes on its Web site. Visitors can cast their votes by clicking on and registering at the "Vote Daily" panel at www.legion.org <<http://www.legion.org>> or by visiting www.refresheverything.com/vetsjobfairs <<http://www.refresheverything.com/vetsjobfairs>>.

Voters can also text message their votes (standard rates apply) by texting *101758 to Pepsi (73774).

The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors finished in first place during February's competition and won \$250,000. That money is still being used to provide items such as therapeutic athletic equipment, sweatsuits, DVDs, CDs, duffle bags and other comfort items to wounded and recovering patients at U.S. military hospitals and warrior transition units around the world.

Hill urged Legionnaires, Legion family members, friends and supporters of The American Legion to spread the message to vote for The American Legion's job fairs.

"Individual voting alone will not win this competition," Hill said. "We need people to post it on their web sites, Facebook and Twitter accounts. They should use all social media methods at their disposal. Operation Comfort Warriors was able to win because American Legion posts, Auxiliary units, Sons of the American Legion squadrons and American Legion Riders chapters all came together and worked toward a common goal. Spreading the word in newsletters and the mainstream media can also help us replicate our earlier success."

With a current membership of 2.5-million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.

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Media contacts: Joe March or John Raughter (317) 630-1253, Cell (317) 748-1926 / (317) 441-8847. A high resolution photo of National Commander Hill is available at www.legion.org.