



ADA Live! Episode 99: Honoring Our Veterans - Services and Support for Veterans and Their Families

Broadcast Date: November 3, 2021

Speaker: Misty Stutsman Fox

Director of the Entrepreneurship and Small Business portfolio at the Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF).

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Hi, I'm Misty Stutsman Fox, and you're listening to ADA Live.

[Music 4 wheel city]

Barry Whaley:

Hey, everybody. On behalf of the Southeast ADA Center, the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University, in the ADA National network, welcome to this episode of ADA Live. I'm Barry Whaley, director of the Southeast ADA Center. As a reminder, listening audience, if have questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act, you can use our online form any time at adalive.org. Each year, 175,000 young Americans enlist in the military. At the heart of this recruitment effort is a sacred promise to take care of all of those who served.

Barry Whaley:

In recognition of Veterans Day, on November 11th, we welcome our guest today, Misty Stutsman Fox. Misty is the Director of the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Portfolio at the Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families, the IVMF. So Misty, I want to welcome you to ADA Live.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Thank you so much for having me today. It's an honor.

Barry Whaley:

Misty, that sacred promise to take care of all that serve, well, that's certainly reflected in Syracuse University's long history of commitment to veterans. I wonder if you could share some of that history, and how the Institute for Veterans and Military Families came to be established.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Sure. So if you really look back, Syracuse University, as you mentioned, had a very long dedication to veterans and their service, and it started with Chancellor Tolley, who opened the floodgates, saying that all veterans were welcome.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

You saw a huge amount of veterans actually come to the Syracuse University campus. Previous to that, we were a small arts institution, and the enrollment actually doubled right after the signing of the GI Bill money, and veterans coming to higher education. From there, we have the longest continuously running ROTC in the nation.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

When Dr. Haynie joined Syracuse University in 2007, he was a professor in Whitman, of entrepreneurship. He had just left the Air Force, and teaching at the Air force Academy, and started a bootcamp for service disabled veterans, called the Entrepreneurship

Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities, to help those veterans returning from the OIF and AEF conflicts to help craft their own vocation.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

What started in 2007 with a group of hopeful entrepreneurs has now turned into an Institute that has four pillars, and more than just one entrepreneurship program, and has served 160,000 to date. We have offices across the nation, and over 100 staff members in support at this point.

Barry Whaley:

That's fantastic, what a number. What did you say? A hundred and how many thousand?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

62,000 in the county.

Barry Whaley:

62?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Wow.

Barry Whaley:

Wow, that's great. That is a very impressive program. Thank you. So, the Institute for Veterans and Military Families, you have a lot of different programs and services and supports. Could you describe some of those for us?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Sure. The Institute is really founded on four pillars. Of course, we have our Entrepreneurship and Small business Pillar, that has 11 national and actually one

international program, that are designed to meet military connected individuals, where they are on their journey.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

If you look at what that means, it means that if they're just thinking about entrepreneurship and they're transitioning, we have a Boots to Business program, if they are scaling very quickly. I'm actually just returning from a conference that we host every year called Veteran Edge Conference, where veteran entrepreneurs that have an annual revenue over \$2.5 million a year, come together to learn how to scale and grow their companies.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Our other three pillars are an amazing research measurement and evaluation team that also works on policy, who are brilliant, and really help lead the space, in terms of cutting edge data that we all need to make decisions, and that decision level data that we all need, to move forward, and make the right resources and tools that veterans can use. Then we also have our AmericaServes Network, which is a community coordinated care network of nonprofits across the nation, making sure that, no wrong door for veterans, they can get to the right resource in the least amount of time.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Then, of course, we have our Onward to Opportunity team, that does a lot of career preparation. They have over 40 in demand job credentials for veterans and military connected individuals, like your PMP, your IT credentials, HR credentials, that they can actually enroll in classes for free, no use of GI Bill or anything, and get those for free, and then be matched with careers as they move forward.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Between those four pillars, as I mentioned, we've served over 160,000 individuals, and we're still pushing forward, just making sure that we create those tools. But our four

pillars, like I said, would be that research, small business, community coordinated care. And of course, our career building.

Barry Whaley:

This sounds very hands-on. It sounds like you're providing practical supports for returning veterans.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Yes, yes it is. It's extremely hands-on. And I think that, to your point, it is just practical. It's what can we use now, to make sure that you can move forward?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

You said it at the top, that really, if we can't protect the post-service lives of our military connected individuals, then it becomes a national security issue. If folks are not better off after the military than they were before the military, that creates a national security issue.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

For us, we see it as an issue of national security, to make sure that veterans and their spouses and their families are getting the jobs that they need, able to craft their own vocations that they need, making sure that they get the right resources. We know that there are tens of thousands of resources out there for veterans. So helping navigate those resources is another thing that I think we all have to do.

Barry Whaley:

Right, yeah. That's a very good point. Very well said. In March of this year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics said that Gulf War-era II veterans had an unemployment rate of 7.3%, and that 40% of those people had service connected disability.

Barry Whaley:

Now, obviously, we start comparing apples oranges when we consider the unemployment rate during the pandemic, and what that has done. But that's still a significant number of people who are unemployed.

Barry Whaley:

That's higher than the 2020 jobless rate for all veterans at 6.5%, and more than double the unemployment rate of 3.1, back in 2019, prior to the pandemic, when we were near full employment, right? I'm curious how many of the veterans that you serve through IVVMF, how many of them have disabilities? Could you talk about maybe how the services for that group may differ, or be the same for other veterans?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Yeah, so we're looking at right about half of those that come through our small business portfolio, identify themselves with the service connected disability. Of course, those ratings can be from 0% to 100%, just depending on the individual themselves. And we really look at how we break up our different programs to make sure they're as approachable as they can be for someone.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We do that in a few different ways. First and foremost, for most of our, if you look at EBV, we're able to craft a educational, a week long, for the folks are really immersed in it. That means that we put them on a plane, we fly them to one of eight institutions across the nation.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

They stay there for an entire week of classes, so they can really go through the ins and outs of starting their business. That way, in all honesty, if you remove the cost of a flight, the cost of a hotel, your barrier then is time, and making the time to do so, and making sure that the classes are set up in a way that folks with different learning needs and abilities, and even physical abilities, can still be all there and present for those classes.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We're doing the same thing for one of our supporters. Wounded Warriors is enabling us to run a program in Florida at the end of the year. What we did there is we really, folks have really adopted online learning in the past year, right, with the pandemic.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We're strengthening our Phase I, which is our online phase for that program, so that it is slightly longer and more in depth, so that the in-person part of that program only needs to be three days. We do this with a lot of our programs. We adopt a three-phase approach, to where folks can learn online, and sort of level set, and get a good foundation of what they can then come into the in-person class with.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

That in-person class can really be focused on getting the materials that they need to execute the idea that they thought of, and really asking themselves the tough questions as they move forward. Those in-person, I guess, events can be two and a half days, if you look at our Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship, or V-WISE program, or about a week, if you look at our EBV, our Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans, or EVVF, which is the same program, but for caretakers and spouses.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Then from there, we have Phase III, and I think this is really the bread and butter of the IBMF, in that it's not just a training program for us. This Phase III allows us to have a continuous relationship with our veterans, meaning we have 41 different post-program support partners that do about \$1 million in pro bono service a year.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

So that as entrepreneurs continue to grow, they may face new challenges, whether that be due to medical status, or just the journey of entrepreneurship alone. We have resources that are there, ready to work with them.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We've gone so far as to employ consultants that understand disability ratings and understand what that, effects of business ownership can be. So that our entrepreneurs can meet with them to understand, what are special resources that are specialized for folks that might be working with disabilities, and what that can look like?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We've even formed some great relationships with certifiers like Disability: IN, formerly USBLN, so that they can also help some of our entrepreneurs that are facing unique challenges get the mentorship that they need as they move forward. I do think that it's interesting.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We did a study with the IBMF, which is our National Survey for Military-Affiliated Entrepreneurs. We found that a majority of veteran with businesses that have a service connected disability, that 46% of them said they didn't feel supported by medical and disability service providers.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

And that 32% said that their disability creates obstacles, and 30% said that entrepreneurship helped them overcoming their challenges, and helped with the recovery process, and played a significant role in that recovery process. I think that's the point, is that with all of this, to say, "How is it different, or how is it not different?" We said it earlier.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

It's very high touch, it's very in-depth, but it's also continuous. So that as you move forward with your business, we have a new resource and another resource that meets you with your scaling needs. And I think that that's all great.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah. I think that continuous relationship, I mean, that is just so valuable, that this isn't a short term type program that somebody is involved in, and then it's like, "Okay, good luck."

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Exactly.

Barry Whaley:

You know, right?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Exactly.

Barry Whaley:

Right.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Exactly.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah, and those long term relationships are so important. The other thing that was interesting is, we are actually recording this episode in October, which is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. So never underestimate that therapeutic value of work, helping with veteran reentry, and helping with reestablishment in the civilian workforce.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Yeah. So, and I think that a big part of all this is that, with the cohort-based model too, you have 30 other veterans that have faced a lot of the same challenges, or they know someone who has.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We can sit here and put together an amazing training program, and we do demand excellence, and set new bars for training programs all the time. Sometimes it's just having that 30 other battle buddies in the room that share experiences, that really create the magic of a lot of this community.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah. That's, that's very true. Good point. Let's go back briefly. You had mentioned the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, and I wonder if you could give me a little more information, on what's offered in bootcamp?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Yeah. Our bootcamp is our oldest program. It was started in 2007. Like we said, it is one of our program that is the foundation of all things that are IVMF. I mean, it's the first thing that we ever started hosting before IVMF was IVMF. So we have a few different versions of VBB now, but we'll start with how it started. Veterans are military-connected individuals. When I say military-connected, in this case, I mean, spouses or caregivers can apply for the program.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Then, that program, depending on where they are in terms of geography, but also what their needs are in terms of timing, is hosted eight times throughout the year at partner institutions across the nation. The partner institutions include folks like the University of Connecticut, or Yukon University of Missouri, Mizzou.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We have Louisiana State University, Florida State University, Texas A&M, UCLA, St. Joseph's University, et cetera. And they host three phases. The first phase, like I mentioned, is about a two and a half week online phase, where you can get level set, meet your classmates, kind of understand what the expectations are, and how we're going to push forward with the program.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

From there, we, like I said, pay for these individuals to get on a flight, to go to one of these institutions, to stay at a hotel for eight days. During those eight days, we bring in over 30 different speakers and breakouts, and all sorts of folks, to chat about everything, business ownership, but a special part of it is, we bring in local entrepreneurs to meet with them too, during the Genius Bar, they can get that real time mentorship.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We know that through research, social networks and mentor networks are one of the top challenges for military-connected entrepreneurs, obviously, because they've PCsed, and they change locations every few years. So being able to bring those folks together, and not only with the social network, but a mentor network, is really important.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

From there, they graduate into what's called Phase III. And in that Phase III, they get all sorts of resources, from sales to website support, to logo design, to databases, et cetera. As I mentioned, we do about \$1 million a year in pro bono services through them. And then they're part of the IBMF family.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

What does that IBMF family mean? We host monthly webinars on a variety of topics, Facebook Lives, while PPP and [inaudible 00:17:09] and restaurant revitalization were all coming out. We are able to get on with the SBA administration, to give them just in time information, so they could then really capitalize and leverage those opportunities as well.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We have 11 other programs that they can then graduate into, to continue their journey. So it's very normal for a graduate to go through our Boots to Business program, or B2B, upon transition, and then go to V-WISE, when they're really getting started, and then graduate into EBV, as they continue to move forward.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Then onto EBV Accelerate, when they hit that five or more employees, and then on to Edge, when they're ready to go contract with a major company. That's that lifetime continuum that we talked about, that was very important.

Barry Whaley:

A comprehensive program, that's fantastic.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Oh yeah.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah. Thanks, Misty. ADA Live listening audience, if you have questions about this topic, or any other ADA Live topic, you can submit your questions, either online, at adalive.org, or you can call the Southeast ADA Center, at 1-404-541-9001. We're going to pause now for a word from our sponsor for this episode.

Announcement:

The Institute for Veterans and Military Families, or IVMF, at Syracuse University, is the first place in higher education dedicated to improving the lives of military families. Beginning in 2007 with a single program, the Institute for Veterans and Military Families' mission has never changed, in service to those who served. Beginning with Whitman School of Management Professor Michael Haynie's experiences, working with traumatically injured veterans, his vision for a program that empowered veterans, post-

service, evolved into something greater. Today, the Institute for Veterans and Military Families has supported over 150,000 veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses, through the provision of career training, connection to community resources, entrepreneurship opportunities, and research and analytics. To learn more about the incredible work of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, please visit ivmf.syracuse.edu.

Barry Whaley:

Thank you, Celestia, and welcome back, everybody. We're talking with Misty Stutsman Fox. She's the Director of the Entrepreneurship and Small Business Portfolio at Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families.

Barry Whaley:

Misty, before the break, you were telling us about the bootcamp, and you had mentioned this consortium of schools that are part of your work. So you want to tell us a little bit more about those schools, and how they were selected, and what role they play in this?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Yeah. So these schools have really dated back to the beginning. If you look at, we started in 2007, and then quickly after, Purdue, Florida State, UCLA, and Texas A&M, decided that they wanted to join, as well.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

How did that work? Honestly, academia is just like any other professional network. We all know each other very well. And when you see a cutting edge program with entrepreneurship going on, and especially one that has the results that EBV does, I mean, 70% of our graduates are starting businesses.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

They had huge revenues last year. 17 graduates landed on the [E5,000 Vet 100 list 00:20:54] last year, which is extremely exciting, and that is the fastest growing veteran-owned businesses in the nation. But these schools were selected because they volunteered.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

So they said, "We want to do this, and our administration's behind us." And this is something that we find just as important as Syracuse University. It's not something that we recruited schools for.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

I think that's very important, because it really shows the dedication that these schools have to making it happen. And I think that that is really what's been the driving force behind how great this program has been for veterans.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

But those schools are, in totality now, St. Joseph's University, Texas A&M University, of course, Syracuse University, and University of Missouri, University of Connecticut, UCLA, so University of California Los Angeles, as well as of course, Louisiana State University, and Florida State University.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

The only two schools that no longer currently host programs, just due to several different changes, would be Cornell and Purdue. But those rules had very specialized programs as well.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

In addition, it's worth mentioning, we've now launched two great new partnerships with community colleges. So our EBV program has been around since 2007.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We have a new program named STRIVE, that actually works in communities with veteran entrepreneurs, and we have schools at East Tennessee State University, as well as Hillsborough Community College, that run those programs within their communities, and were expanded to three new schools this year. Again, the great part about that is, it's a volunteer effort upon these schools.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

So they're the ones that help organize it and keep it to the IVMF standards. But it's just as much of a passion project for them as it is for us.

Barry Whaley:

I'm glad you mentioned the community colleges, because I believe that they play a very critical role, especially with veteran re-entry to civilian life, as well as younger people who really aren't sure if college is for them, or what they've want to study, or maybe they're looking at more of a practical trade. So I think those linkages with the community college systems are so very important.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Exactly. To your point, they're just not sure about higher ed, and it's something, to the earlier point I made about the only barrier being time, all of our programs are free.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

It's even less of a barrier if you just have to go over once a week to a community college, as opposed to a clear week straight of vacation.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

And that's the whole point, is we're trying to create several different points of access, so that folks can just get started, get moving and get out of the analysis paralysis, and just make a forward movement into entrepreneurship, and figure it out, if it's for them or not. Either way, we have a program for that.

Barry Whaley:

Yeah. That's good, good information. So we know that people, Misty, that returning veterans, the experience of civilian reentry can be so very different for different veterans. Some people do real well, some people struggle.

Barry Whaley:

I'm wondering if we could talk just for a minute about, what does the military do when you are leaving service? What do they do to prepare you, for exiting service and reentry?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

I think that there's a lot of different things that the military does. I think that it's now just, how do we start to tie all these pieces together in terms of, for best use?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Of course, they have training in their transitioning service members in the TAP program. So in that, there's something for career, career education, as well as entrepreneurship education, as well as how to start looking for a college degree.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

With that, it is, that's something they could do within the last 18 months of their transition before they go into the civilian life. There's, of course, SkillBridge. And then they have public-private partnerships, such as the Onward to Opportunity program that I mentioned earlier, for further training and connection with employers.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

And I think while that is great, I think that the other idea, or the thing that we have to really think about, as service providers, is that veterans are also still trying to figure out, "Where am I going after transition? Am I going back to my hometown," which about a third do. "Am I going to a new town? Am I going to wherever my last duty station is? And then, what do I need to know about industry trends, et cetera?"

Misty Stutsman Fox:

While the military does a lot for folks, I think that there's a role for employers and other folks, to step in at that point. Of course, we're always hoping that we can get to a little further on the continuum to the left, before transition, to make the connection, then, so that we can make sure that as they transition out, it's as smooth as possible.

Barry Whaley:

So Misty, I'm curious, do you become aware of transitioning veterans before they leave service, or after they have left service? And typically, how long after they leave service, before they find you?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

It really depends. We can find them during transition, through our programs like Boots to Business or Onward to Opportunity, right? And those are two programs that they can do prior to transition.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Usually there's an 18-month timeline, meaning that they can't take advantage of those programs, until they're within 18 months of transition, so that's one consideration. Now that said, on the flip side of when they find us, it can really be different for any of our programs.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Let's take EBV, for example. EBV, the typical graduate is a 44-year-old E-4, with a graduate degree. So what does that mean? It typically means that they only had one or two enlistments. So they were only in for a few years, and then came out, usually in their twenties somewhere, and got their education, hopefully using the GI Bills, that's one of the most expensive packages that we have.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Then from there, got some corporate experience, and then started their business. When you look at how typically veteran entrepreneurs outearn their civilian counterparts, they typically pay their employees up to 20% more. But they also typically have a great background, of which they've used a few things.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Now that said, I think, that as we mentioned, there's over 40,000 VSOs in the nation, and VSO being a Veteran Service Organization. With that amount of VSOs, you get into a lot of noise, in terms of, "What resource is good, and where should I go first?"

Misty Stutsman Fox:

And I think that that's the part that, a lot of folks, as they're figuring out the transition, and figuring out how to get a car, and buy a house and all of those other items, that can be a huge challenge. So, finding us, while we wish that it was, as soon as they came out, or as soon as before they get out of the service or transition, we also know that being able to have timely resources, no matter where they are in their transition, is a great item, and a great, just impact, for that.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

To further explain that a little bit, for many service members, the transition experience is tenuous and difficult. You're required to, as I mentioned, find a new car, start a business, move to a different part of the country, and find your new identity. And we know that there's a lot of challenges.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

That loss of connection with military community is one of the top challenges for veterans, or the sense of purpose and camaraderie, and then navigating the out health system, and financial struggles, and all of those things that kind of get piled into it. And it's not just a problem for a few months. It can be something that lasts a decade.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

So I think that being able to have these programs that yes, on transition, but if you miss it, then, don't worry. We can still work with you six months a year, 10 years, seven years, 20 years after you transition is just as important, because it isn't something that happens in a snapshot of time. It's a long cycle.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Transition isn't something where you just go, "Boom, I'm done. I'm transitioned, and we're all set now." It's something that is, it's continuous, and that you have to continually work on.

Barry Whaley:

Very good points, all of them, Misty. Thank you. So let's talk about employers for a minute, all right?

Barry Whaley:

What role do employers tell in helping with this transition? How does IVMF, how do you engage those employers?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We really do a lot with our employer side of things. We've done some research centered around workforce readiness, which we defined as the combination of what the veteran brings to the workplace, and what the employer does to proactively help veterans succeed there.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

An employer's customized approach to veteran hiring? So you've got to focus on more skill sets and specialty areas, supporting mentorship programs, ensuring that employees and HR professionals, in particular, are trained on military cultural confidence. And that's key.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

There's been things like our Veteran's Job Mission, which our COO, when she was at JPMorgan Chase helped set up, in ways that corporations are now bonding together to say, "How do we educate each other?"

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We'll also run the coalition for veteran-owned businesses, which is the same idea, but for supplying diversity individuals, to say, "Okay, what do we need to do better to get more veteran-owned businesses into our supply chains? And how do we translate these skills. And how do we create custom programs to fit their unique needs?"

Misty Stutsman Fox:

For veteran job seekers, it's time to explore pre-transition career resources and educational benefits, leverage mentorship and on the job training programs, and seek positions at veteran friendly organizations when possible, because they will likely have those customized items to move forward. But what we do to work with employers is, we have our Onward to Opportunity direct to hire efforts.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

As folks are coming out with their new credential, whether that's their PMP or their CISSP, as I mentioned earlier, they have employers that can then work with them directly to get them onboarded. As I mentioned, there's the Veteran's Job Mission, which we really help inform in the space, as well as the Coalition for Veteran Owned Business.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We also worked on a cultural competence training for HR professionals, and have trained nearly 20,000 HR professionals on building and developing hiring initiatives for veterans' military spouses. And I think that being able to concentrate on both sides of the coin like that, is just extremely important and it puts the onus on both sides.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

So what can an employer do to better meet the veteran, and how can a veteran better position themselves to meet that employer? Then hopefully, between those two items, you have a more successful transition.

Barry Whaley:

Very good point. Yup, thank you. Finally, I'm curious. Say I'm a veteran, or I've just recently left service, and I'm trying to figure out what to do next.

Barry Whaley:

I'm kind of lost in my transition to civilian life. What are some of these start here resources that you might want to recommend for folks?

Misty Stutsman Fox:

No, there's so many greater organizations out there. Of course, I mean, I have to say, get to know the Institute for Veterans and Military Families.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

Because it's not just what we do, but it's the network that we command, that can help get veterans to the right resource, between our AmericaServes work, and Onward to Opportunity, and our small business portfolio, and even our amazing researchers.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

We have connections to many, many different resources. The number of times someone's come in our front door with something that we don't technically offer a program on, but we're still able to connect them, it's great.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

I would also say get involved in your communities. Look at things like Team IWB, or Redefine, and just groups that you can volunteer with, The Mission Continues, to get connected back into your community.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

And the reason being, because those folks will know what resources are right in your backyard, that can help with anything in transition, and know other folks that are serving near you, and getting the help you need. The other big thing is, with our educational partners, Onward to Opportunity, and other great organizations that are looking at how to get you connected, and educated on transition, and the struggles that you might face, and the reason being is that it's another network.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

I think a lot of times, veterans tend to think, "Well, I should take that resource from someone else," but they're not necessarily, while we all work in a resource constrained environment, because it is a nonprofit, it's not finite, meaning it's developed and delivered for veterans. So never be afraid to take advantage of those great organizations.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

If you're starting a business, another great place to get involved is, of course, the Small Business Administration, they have resource partners across the nation that host workshops, and things like that, that you can again get connected to like-minded individuals, and other groups like [Kaufman 00:35:13], who have one million [inaudible 00:35:15], where you can meet up with other entrepreneurs, and really kind of get the learning that you need.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

But I think that for everyone, it's diving into community, and finding other folks with shared background experiences that you can connect with. Because then, when you go forward and need a resource, you can find someone that's already vetted that resource, that knows how it works, that can give you the tips that you need to move forward in your transition.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

So my biggest piece of advice would just be, get connected. Don't be afraid to send out a connection or a message on LinkedIn or any other platform that you can use. That way, you can start really working through, and finding all the resources that have been curated for you as a military-connected individual.

Barry Whaley:

That's great. Thank you, Misty. The resources you mentioned, and many more, will be included on the resource sheet that will accompany this episode of ADA Live.

Barry Whaley:

Misty, thank you so much for sharing your time with us today. What a great program you have. I wish you all the best, and continued success.

Misty Stutsman Fox:

This has been great. Thanks so much in giving us the opportunity to share about it. I mean, the first best step is for someone to actually know that we're here, and then from there, get in touch with our team, and we'll get you to the right resource.

Barry Whaley:

Very true. Yup, thank you. So thank you, Misty, and thank you, ADA Live listeners, for joining us for this episode.

Barry Whaley:

To access ADA Live episodes, go to our website. That's adalive.org. All episodes are archived with streamed audio, accessible transcripts, and as I mentioned, comprehensive resources.

Barry Whaley:

You can listen to ADA Live on our Soundcloud channel, just go to soundcloud.com/adalive. You can also download ADA Live to your mobile device. Just go to your podcast app and search for ADA live.

Barry Whaley:

If you have questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act, you can submit them anytime online at adalive.org, or you can contact your regional ADA Center at 1-800-949-4232. And as always, those calls are free, and they're confidential.

Barry Whaley:

ADA Live is a program at the Southeast ADA Center. Our producer is Celestia Ohrazda, with Beth Harrison, Mary Morder, Emily Reuber, Marsha Schwanke, and me, I'm Barry Whaley.

Barry Whaley:

Our music is from 4 Wheel City, The Movement 4 Improvement. We'll see you next episode, and Happy Veterans Day, everybody.

4 Wheel City: (rapping)

[End of Transcript]

Disclaimer: The contents of this publication are developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant #90DP0090-01-00). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living

(ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

The information, materials, and/or technical assistance provided by the Southeast ADA Center are intended solely as informal guidance and are neither a determination of your legal rights or responsibilities under the Act, nor binding on any agency with enforcement responsibility under the ADA. The Southeast ADA Center does not warrant the accuracy of any information contained herein.

Any links to non-Southeast ADA Center information are provided as a courtesy, and are neither intended to, nor do they constitute, an endorsement of the linked materials. The Southeast ADA Center provides these links as a courtesy and does not endorse, take responsibility, or exercise control of the organization nor vouch for the accuracy or accessibility of the contents of the link destination. The information is intended solely as informal guidance and is neither a determination of legal rights or responsibilities under the ADA, nor binding on any agency with enforcement responsibility under the ADA.

Contact for More Information or Assistance:

Southeast ADA Center

Email: ADAsoutheast@law.syr.edu

Phone: 404-541-9001