

ALLIED BARTON

National Security Services Company



NECHV Veterans Training School Staff: Tony Padillia, Registrar and Training Manager; Christine Pineda, Employment Specialist; and John Silva, Employment Department Manager

LOCATION:

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



[> FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NECHV](#)

A THRIVING EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP: HOW ONE HVRP HAS GENERATED SUCCESS

Grantees in the U.S. Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) help veterans who experience homelessness reintegrate into competitive employment. In Boston, MA, the New England Center and Home for Veterans (NECHV), a former HVRP grantee, has established a successful, longstanding relationship with AlliedBarton Security Services, a national employer with two offices in the Boston area. In addition to this Boston-based partnership, other HVRPs and AlliedBarton work collaboratively in Houston; Washington, D.C.; Jacksonville; Tampa; West Palm Beach; and other cities. These partnerships highlight best practices in finding veterans work in a field with great potential for long-term growth and career progression.

The security services industry is in many ways an ideal fit for veterans who are transitioning to civilian life. Security officers must demonstrate vigilance, integrity, quick reactions, clear judgment, leadership, and the ability to offer protection—often in the face of danger and crisis—all of which veterans exhibited and honed during their military service. Security is also a component of everyday life in the military. NECHV and AlliedBarton both recognize these complementary values and unique skills veterans bring to the security field and have partnered to offer career opportunities to veterans who graduate from NECHV's exemplary Professional Protection Officer training program.

The current partnership with AlliedBarton began when John Silva, Employment Department Manager of NECHV's Veterans Training School, saw a need to align the training school with the NECHV's employment services. He began contacting larger security agencies in Boston to feel out options and determine whether they were open to hiring veterans. One of the contacts he made was Charles Franklin, who was then a recruiter at AlliedBarton (and is now with the VA). Both men are veterans and understood that all veterans come with some level of security built into

Creating Successful Partnerships: Tips for Success



Employment development specialists working with veterans can develop successful partnerships with employers by following these recognized tips for success:

- **Meet employers in person.** Tour their facility and ask questions such as “What type of person would be successful here?”
- **Look for employers that are mission driven.** Seek those that are Veteran run or that make it a part of their mission to hire Veterans. Smaller employers and those that consider themselves socially conscious may be receptive to hiring your clients.
- **Describe the benefits you offer.** Mention that you prescreen applicants, match them to appropriate jobs, and offer post-placement support.
- **Make a successful match.** Know the employers’ needs and your jobseekers’ skills. Don’t send someone who isn’t a good fit.
- **Prepare job candidates.** Provide or refer them to training in both occupational and soft skills (e.g., punctuality, appropriate attire, work ethic, etc.). Prepare them for interviews and help them highlight their strengths.
- **Offer ongoing support to Veterans and employers.** Work with Veterans to address issues (e.g., substance use) that interfere with success on the job. Recognize that sometimes a placement doesn’t work, and resolve to learn from these experiences.

their initial entry military training and subsequent service, so together they created a pipeline that helped build out AlliedBarton’s labor force while offering outstanding opportunities to graduates of the NECHV security officer training program.

Security Training

NECHV’s Professional Protection Officer Course, which is part of the Veterans Training School, is taught by Registrar and Training Manager Tony Padilla, a retired U.S. Army Ranger. He has been leading the course for the past 2 years and has to date trained 61 veterans, including 6 females. The course is a rigorous 6-week, 4-hour-per-day training schedule that culminates with students taking the 4-hour International Foundation for Protection Officers (IFPO) exam. Those who pass the final exam receive IFPO certification, which is valid for 2 years. The IFPO is one of the few certified security programs in the United States, so certification opens career doors for veterans that might otherwise have remained shut. Mr. Padilla designed the course to include a robust selection of topics, including communications, crime prevention, physical security, safety, crisis intervention, risk and threat management, terrorism, surveillance, use of force, and VIP protection.

Mr. Padilla accepts 10 to 12 students for each course from among the veteran applicants, and he demands absolute commitment of those who are selected. Students must sign a participation contract and adhere to IFPO rules and regulations throughout the course. When selecting students, Mr. Padilla looks for veterans who display accountability, strong ethics, and professionalism. He explains that the majority of participants performed security/guard duty while in the military, so they have practical experience that gives them the foundation needed for a successful security career.

One female veteran who was hired by AlliedBarton after completing NECHV’s security course stated: “The most important thing about the training was Mr. Padilla’s honesty about the job and the attitudes you will face—good, bad, and indifferent—and that everyone has good and bad days on the job.” She noted how helpful it was to learn how to fit in at a job site, particularly as a female in a male-dominated field of work. When asked about the key to her success, she replied: “You have to be honest and cannot bend the rules for even one person. Even if they don’t like what you say, they know where you stand. It should be a very honest job, and it is a job that demands integrity.”

Post-Graduation Strategy

Graduates of the NECHV course are extremely well trained and often obtain a perfect score on the certification exam. Mr. Padilla notes that the AlliedBarton representatives who visited the classroom were impressed

enough with the thoroughness of the training to establish a memorandum of understanding with NECHV that guarantees an interview for each student who both passes the course and passes the certification exam. Although graduates are not guaranteed a job, the guarantee of an interview is all that is needed for most of them to succeed.

Samantha Thomas, AlliedBarton's Boston-area Director of Communications and Media Relations, says a very high percentage of veterans referred from NECHV are hired by her company. She describes some of the benefits of hiring veterans, which includes their leadership abilities, dedication, and affinity for training. She explains that skills developed during military service are very compatible to security work and that AlliedBarton looks for candidates who are driven and looking for a long-term career in security, not just a temporary job.

AlliedBarton is already known for its commitment to hiring veterans and has a company-wide policy to participate in a military hiring program called Hire Our HeroesSM. The company is a provider of highly trained security personnel, and hiring military personnel is an important part of its recruiting strategy. Ms. Thomas says AlliedBarton recognizes that most veterans are responsible and possess the leadership qualities and skills needed to provide high-level security services. She states that the partnership with NECHV allows her company to receive well-trained security offers and put veterans to work, which she calls a "win-win situation." She further notes, "The veterans coming out of the course have transitioned to civilian life and received training, so they are able to enter the workforce and excel in the divisions in which they are placed. They come in with a more structured, disciplined attitude than many civilian employees, so they are able to transition quicker into the role of security officer. Their ability to follow instructions and procedures outshines many non-veterans."

Job Retention

Because most of the veterans being served by NECHV are homeless and have experienced challenging situations, they often need extra support after securing employment to retain the job and be successful in the workplace. NECHV provides extensive job retention

support services, including 21 months of follow-up with all veterans placed in a job.

Mr. Silva notes that retention is always a challenge, particularly when a veteran wants to just move on with his or her life and feel independent. For this reason, the leaders at the NECHV training center stress to veterans that getting a job is just the beginning; they must also have a strategy in place to keep the job.

NECHV helps veterans develop job retention strategies and provides case management for each veteran who secures employment. The case managers assist veterans with any issues or conflicts that arise on the job, such as if they have trouble getting along with a boss, have difficulty fulfilling a job requirement, need to change hours so they can go to school, need to reduce or increase hours, want to transfer sites, or need help finding a new job before resigning from the one they have. One way case managers offer support services is to act as intermediaries. For example, Mr. Silva explains that if a veteran is having a problem at work and wants to quit, the case manager or other NECHV staff will talk with the person and advise him or her "not to relinquish anything yet, and to avoid taking a defensive stance or storming off the job." Staff encourage veterans to approach the conflict from a very businesslike point of view and to look for alternatives, such as requesting a new shift, more hours, or following the official process of arbitration for grievances, if necessary. If allowed by the veteran and the employer's human resources department, the case manager can even contact the employer and become engaged in the conflict resolution.

Mr. Silva states that the overriding two principles the case managers must follow are: 1) Do no harm; and 2) Create a positive experience. He notes that as part of conflict resolution, NECHV staff also find out whether the veteran is living up to expectations of the employer. He says his staff has a good read on the veterans they work with and evaluate each



Travis Partington, member of the Board of Trustees for NECHV, volunteers his time to teach veterans an Introduction to Computer Basics course.

situation individually. If staff determine the veteran has issues that need addressing (e.g., anger issues, mental health disorders, substance use disorders, trouble showing up for work) they can provide resources and follow-up services. Because the NECHV is a wraparound model, it provides VA and non-VA eligible resources, nonprofit groups, clinicians, etc., onsite for easy access. It also has connections to more intensive and extensive resources located outside the center, when needed.

It is noteworthy that Ms. Thomas says in her 3 years working at AlliedBarton, she has not run into any employee issues with the veterans who have been hired out of the NECHV training course. This is a clear sign that NECHV is selecting outstanding students for the course and expertly training them to succeed in civilian careers.

Continued Training

Once hired by AlliedBarton, the training continues for the veterans. Ms. Thomas explains that the company

believes training is vital, so it offers a broad range of training –not just for new security officers, but ongoing training for the life of job. All new AlliedBarton employees receive initial security officer orientation, in addition to on-the-job training to prepare them for particular clients' needs, the site, and the job assignment. Ms. Thomas explains that “the security field is vast and constantly evolving, so an individual’s willingness to train and dedication to ongoing learning is an indicator of success.”

Onward and Up

AlliedBarton is a company committed to promoting from within, so look to see many NECHV graduates rise to prominent careers within this company that is so dedicated to our veterans. This 10-year partnership is a testament to the success that is possible when HVRP grantees team with businesses who specialize in career fields well-tailored to veterans. Thank you to NECHV and AlliedBarton for providing an example for the field.

For more information about HVRP and building employer partnerships visit www.NVTAC.org or email us at NVTAC@ahpnet.com.



Advice to Other Grantees:

Mr. Silva recommends taking a holistic approach to the employment by:

- **Exploring the question “What does employment mean to the vet?”** Think about what it means in terms of reconnecting to community, seeking education, finding housing, building self-esteem, finding social connections, etc.
- **Retaining good contact information for each veteran who leaves the center and creating a community atmosphere.** NECHV tries to create an alumni-type feel for graduates of the training school. It has an active LinkedIn group for graduates, and staff try to help graduates see the value in continued engagement with other veterans and the NECHV.
- **Looking past the basic data of how many veterans are employed and retained, and instead reinterpreting it more broadly.** “The value is not in the number of jobs. The value is in resource development and strategy, and our ability to evaluate where the veteran is and what his or her barriers are to employment. It is not enough just to say ‘here’s the job.’ We are here to engage veterans and discuss strategies with them, no matter what stage they are in. We all do our part in finding the best resources and ensuring they are value added.”

NVTAC

National Veterans Technical Assistance Center

View more NVTAC success stories at NVTAC.org