



THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OF OKALOOSA AND WALTON COUNTIES



NORTHWEST FLORIDA BRAC FAMILIES TRANSITION COUNCIL

February 2009

ABOUT US

The Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties is a non-profit, non-partisan, 501 (c)(3) organization founded in 1996 to identify and facilitate the management of workforce issues in our local community and oversee the daily delivery of employment and training services to employers, workers, and jobseekers through its JobsPlus One-Stop Centers.

Since the announcement of the U.S. Department of Defense's 2005 Base and Realignment Closures (BRAC) recommendations, the Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties has committed to identifying ways of easing the transition the U.S. 7th Special Forces Group –(Airborne) from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina to the Emerald Coast of Florida. Understanding the challenges relocating presents to military families, in 2006 the Workforce Board formed a small BRAC working group and began pinpointing gaps in our local services in order to prepare for their arrival. As the news spread across our region, others began to pledge their support and wanted to know how they could best assist us. Agreeing the time was right, the Workforce Board expanded the group to include more community services and this led to the development of the Northwest Florida BRAC Families Transition Council. In addition to the Workforce Board's leadership, the Council includes representatives from the local two-county communities, military installations, schools, colleges and universities, businesses, religious organizations, and political leadership.

BRAC UPDATE:

Greetings,

This update is designed to keep members of our Northwest Florida BRAC Families Transition Council and the community aware of decisions, activities and timelines associated with the move of the U.S. Army 7th Special Forces (Airborne) from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina to Eglin Air Force Base.

As most folks know by now, the 7th SFG (A) is scheduled to begin arriving in the Spring of 2010, with their full complement of soldiers, support personnel and equipment due here by the Fall of 2011.

Clearing of unexploded ordinance is well underway at the Army site on the west side of Hwy 85 west of Duke Field. Site clearing will follow closely behind and those familiar with the area are already beginning to see the increase in construction equipment movement. Contracts have been awarded for the major construction elements within the new cantonment, and the Workforce Board is busily at work making every effort to see that local subcontractors and workers are a major part of the construction.

The Transition Council also remains in close contact with key personnel at Eglin overseeing this move as well as with the Family Readiness officials at the 7th. As has been the case since 2006 when the decision to base the 7th here at Eglin was made, all decisions on reaching out to the families of the Group are being made on a timeline offered by the commanders at the 7th. With the kind of deployment schedule the 7th endures, our Council fully understands and accepts the need to adhere to timelines that best benefit the soldiers and their families.

For your information, the following link to USASOC News Service <http://news.soc.mil/about/about.htm> is provided as a way for our local community to begin to better understand and appreciate the missions of these special warriors.

The next meeting of the Northwest Florida BRAC Families Transition Council is slated for April. Members will be notified well in advance and will also be kept posted on any ongoing or changing circumstances.

For more information, please contact DeDe Haynes, at dhaynes@jobsplus02.com or Jim Breitenfeld at jbreit@cox.net .

**Mary Lou Reed, Executive Director
Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties
109 8th Avenue
Shalimar, FL 32579
Phone: 850.651.2315
Email: mlreed@jobsplus02.com**

**Archived BRAC Updates
can viewed at:
<http://jobsplusonestop.com/projects/>**

News You Can Use

Bill offers stability to military spouses

(Fayetteville Observer © 2/26/2009)

A bill introduced by Sen. Richard Burr on Wednesday would allow military spouses to claim the same home state as the service members to whom they are married. Under current military law, a soldier can claim a single state — Florida, for instance — as his home of record no matter where the military sends him. But his wife doesn't have the same privilege. "This bill would give a military spouse who moves out of state because of the service member's military orders the same option to claim one state of domicile, regardless of where they are stationed," Burr, a Republican from Winston-Salem, said. Rep. John Carter, a Republican from Texas, reintroduced a similar bill in the House. His district includes Fort Hood, one of the Army's most populous posts...

FSU, UNCP to study BRAC's effect:

(Fayetteville Observer © 2/19/2009)

Two area universities are teaming up to study the effect base realignment could have on minorities in the Cape Fear region. The study, called "Economic Impact of BRAC in the 11 Member Counties: Bridging the Gap of the Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Populations," will look at how minorities in the region could benefit from BRAC. The \$5 million study will be conducted by the schools of business at Fayetteville State University and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. It is being funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and should be completed in mid-July. The study will examine several issues, including salaries and salary disparities, unemployment and the types of jobs that could be available through BRAC...

Cumberland County Schools - Fayetteville, North Carolina

(CCS website ©2/19/2009)

The CCS has students from more than 44 different countries. More than 80 different native languages are spoken by students in the CCS. In addition to English, the top five languages spoken are: Spanish, Korean, German, Chinese, and Vietnamese...

Educator explains how local businesses partner with schools to provide relevant courses and job skills

(Lake City Journal 2/22/2009)

Businesses can get highly trained workers, with the specific skills needed for each job, by working with area high schools and colleges to develop relevant curriculums. That was one of the messages to members of the Lake City/Columbia County Chamber of Commerce at the quarterly luncheon on Wednesday. The featured speaker was C. Jeff Scroggins, Director of CHOICE Institutes & Career Technical Education for the Okaloosa County School District. Scroggins also had a message for students: Three of his students have been offered \$72,000-a-year jobs in industry, even before they graduate...

Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (CAA) Project

In an effort to reduce the employment difficulties experienced by our military spouses, the Department of Labor (DOL) and Department of Defense (DOD) established a Military Spouse Career Advancement Initiative.

This funding has made it possible for over 600 spouses from Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field to receive a CAA grant up to \$3000 for one year, potentially renewable a second year for an additional \$3,000.

Spouses use this money to pay for expenses directly related to postsecondary education and training, including tuition, books, necessary equipment, and credentialing and licensing fees in national identified high-growth, portable career fields.

| Area of Study | Enrolled |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Education | 151 |
| Healthcare | 290 |
| Construction | 15 |
| IT | 27 |
| Finance | 57 |
| Hospitality | 3 |
| Business Administration | 40 |
| Human Resources | 11 |
| Homeland Security | 9 |
| | |
| TOTAL | 603 |



WDB Meeting Calendar March 2009

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--|
| 2 | 3 | 4 Executive and Finance Committees mtg at 8:30 | 5 | 6 | |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | |
| 23 | 24 Youth Development Council mtg @ 9:00 at Niceville Council Chambers | 25 | 26 Business Competitiveness Council @ 7:30 JobsPlus Council mtg @ 9:00 | 27 | |
| 30 | 31 | Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at JobsPlus — Fort Walton | | | |

Provided by:
The Workforce Development Board
of Okaloosa and Walton Counties

109 8th Avenue
Shalimar, Florida 32579
Phone: 850.651.2315
Fax: 850.651.3165
Email: wdb02@jobsplus02.com
Website: <http://jobsplusonestop.com/>

